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**National Identity, Classical Tradition, Christian Reform and  
Colonial Expansion at the Ends of the Earth: An Analysis of  
Representations of the Swedish and Norwegian Peoples in Adam of  
Bremen's *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* and the  
Irish in Gerald of Wales's *Topography of Ireland***

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A thesis submitted to the National University of Ireland, Cork in fulfilment of the  
doctorate of philosophy in History

School of History

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## Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter 1: ‘Adam and Gerald in the Context of Church Reform and Secular Expansion’	
Introduction	19
Adam of Bremen: A Brief Portrait	22
The Immediate Context: Archbishop Adalbert and Internal Crisis in Hamburg-Bremen	24
Hamburg-Bremen in the Broader Context of Papal Primacy and Empire	27
Adam’s Model of a Good Pastor: A Response to Gregory the Great and Bede	30
Ambivalence and Change of Character in Adam’s Representation of Adalbert	35
Adam’s Adalbert: Superficial Secular Glory and Internal Paganism	40
Gerald of Wales: Conquest, Reform and Crusade	53
Gerald of Wales in the Context of Conquest, Colonisation and Reform	56
Crisis in the Centre: Gerald, Henry II and the Crusades	61
Gerald and the Partial Failure of the Irish Conquest	63
Conclusion	66
Chapter 2: ‘Location’	
Introduction:	67
Adam, Gerald and the Islands in the Immense Ocean at the Physical Limit of the World	69
Adam, Gerald and the Zonal Maps of the Planet	76
Adam, Gerald and the Medieval World on T/O Maps and <i>Mappae Mundi</i>	79
The National Library MS 700 Map, or ‘Gerald’s Map’	84

Adam and Classical and Medieval Representations of the Northern Region:	
Evil or Blessed Locations	86
Adam's Sweden and the Ancient <i>locus amoenus</i> (pleasant place) and Blessed Islands	90
Gerald and Ireland: The Blissful Island of Abundance	93
Adam, Gerald and Wonders in Peripheral Locations	96
Conclusion:	103
Chapter 3: 'Description of Peoples in Adam and Gerald: Responses to Ancient Stereotypes, Reform Agendas, Conversion and Salvation'	
Introduction	104
Names for Sweden and Norway and their Inhabitants in Adam and his Sources and Models	108
Adam and the Origins of the Swedes and their Identification with Goths and Scythians	111
Adam, the Conversion of the North, and its Ultimate goal: Christian Salvation	114
Adam and the Fulfilment of Ezekiel's Biblical Prophecy Leading to Salvation	117
Adam's Depiction of Swedes and Norwegians of his Own Era	127
Adam and the Pastoral Lifestyle and Social Organisation in Sweden and Norway	131
Adam and the Northmen as Hyperboreans; an Ideal People	136
Adam's Ideals of Conversion: a Response to Bede and Gregory the Great	137
Adam and the Partial Failure of the Swedish Mission	142
Adam and Religious Life in Norway: a Triumph for Christianity	144
Gerald of Wales and the Irish	145
Gerald and the Names of Ireland and the Irish People	147
Gerald and the Origins of the Irish People	149
Gerald's Ideals of Pastoral Care and his View of the Irish Church	153

Gerald's Disregard of the Irish Reform Movement	159
Gerald and the Irish: Appearance and Character	162
Gerald and the Irish Pastoral Way of Life	172
Gerald and the Social Organisation of the Irish	174
Conclusion:	179
 Chapter 4: 'Adam's and Gerald's Strange and Monstrous Peoples' Introduction	 180
Adam and Gerald and the Ancient and Medieval Tradition of Populating the Periphery with Monstrous Beings	182
Adam and Gerald and the Implications of the Word Monstrous	186
The Monstrous Peoples: Do They Exist? Are they Human?	188
The Strange and Monstrous Beings in Adam's Narrative: Humans in Need of Conversion	190
Adam, the Amazons and Divine Vengeance	200
The Monstrous in Norway	201
Gerald and the Monstrous and Strange Beings in Ireland as Signs or Portents: 'A Wolf that Talked With a Priest'	203
Gerald and the Ox-men	208
Conclusion	213
Conclusion	214
Bibliography	217

## **Declaration**

I certify that the work presented in this thesis has not been submitted for any degree or diploma, at this or any other university and that all of the work/research described herein is my own work.

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**Britt Forde**

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## Abbreviations

<i>AB</i>	Adam of Bremen, <i>History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen</i>
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
<i>Expugnatio</i>	Gerald of Wales, <i>The Conquest of Ireland</i>
<i>HE</i>	Bede, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum</i>
<i>Hist. adv. Paganos</i>	Orosius, <i>Historiarum adversus paganos libri septem</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
-SSrG	<i>Scriptores rerum Germanicarum</i>
-SSrM	<i>Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum</i>
-AA	<i>Auctores Antiquissimi</i>
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church
<i>NH</i>	Pliny the Elder, <i>Naturalis Historia</i> (The Natural History)
<i>De Nuptiis</i>	Martianus Capella, <i>De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii</i>
PL	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne
RS	Rolls Series ( <i>Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores</i> )
SDHK	<i>Diplomatarium Suecanum</i>
<i>Top</i>	Gerald of Wales, <i>The History and Topography of Ireland</i>



## Introduction

This thesis will examine the representations of the Swedes and the Norwegians in Adam of Bremen's *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* (c 1074) and the Irish in the first recension of Gerald of Wales' *Topography of Ireland* (1188).<sup>1</sup> It will pay particular attention to the influence of classical and medieval geographical and ethnographical thought and the agenda of contemporary ecclesiastical reformers and imperial territorial expansion on the two authors. In order to analyse the representations of 'normal' (historically attested) inhabitants, as well as the monstrous or strange peoples the authors also place in these countries, it is necessary to examine the locations they inhabit. In ancient as well as medieval ethnographical thought, geographical location was believed to influence an individual's or a people's character. Whilst the focus of the thesis is predominantly on Adam's work, a comparison with Gerald's account will enable a better understanding of both writers' views. This thesis will argue that the cumulative image of the inhabitants that emerges in Adam's work is a positive representation of the Swedes and Norwegians of his own era, whereas the image of the Irish in Gerald's narrative is starkly negative. This thesis will suggest that the secular and ecclesiastic context of each writer and their engagement with earlier sources and models, determines their approach to the people of whom they write.

Robert Bartlett, who wrote the essential sole biography of Gerald of Wales in 1982, compared Adam's account of Sweden and Gerald's of Ireland and pointed out the economic similarities between the societies Adam and Gerald depict.<sup>2</sup> In an age of expansion they were both seen, by their imperial neighbours, as undeveloped places ripe for exploitation.<sup>3</sup> He also observed that these regions in medieval times were seen as 'another world'—a world that shared certain characteristics: they were politically fragmented, sparsely populated territories where the

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<sup>1</sup> The editions used in this thesis are: Adam of Bremen, *Magistri Adam Bremensis Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, Bernhard Schmeidler, (ed.) MGH SSrG, Vol. 2 (Hannover-Leipzig, 1917); Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, Francis J. Tschan (tr. and intro.) (New York, 1959; with new intro. by Timothy Reuter, New York, 2002). Also used in this thesis is a Swedish translation based on Schmeidler's edition: *Adam av Bremen, Historien om Hamburgstiftet och dess Biskopar*, Emanuel Svenberg (tr.) with commentary by Carl Fredrik Hallencreutz, Kurt Johannesson, Tore Nyberg and Anders Piltz (Stockholm, 1984). Both translations use the chapter divisions which correspond to the Roman numerals in Schmeidler's edition of the work as will this thesis. Tschan's translation of Adam's narrative will henceforth be abbreviated as AB; Schmeidler's edition and the Swedish translation as *Adam Bremensis* and *Adam av Bremen* respectively. Gerald of Wales, *Giraldus Cambrensis in Topographia Hibernie*. Text of the first recension. J. John O'Meara (ed.), *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Section C, Vol. 52, Ch. 4 (1948-50) 113-178; Gerald of Wales, *The History and Topography of Ireland*, J.J. O'Meara (tr.) (London, 1982). *Topographia Hibernie* will be cited by page numbers as it has no chapter divisions. O'Meara's English translation of the *Topography* will henceforth be abbreviated as *Top*. The numbers will refer to chapters.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales: A Voice of the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2006; first issued 1982 with the title *Gerald of Wales 1146-1223*).

<sup>3</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 132. See also Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950-1350* (Princeton, 1994) 137.

agricultural potential of the land was not reached, where the inhabitants did not engage in trade or manufacture.<sup>4</sup> Michael Richter, on a similar note, suggested that medieval Ireland could be profitably studied in a wider context of European expansion and growth.<sup>5</sup> Comparative historical research forms the basis of my methodological approach: to examine similarities and differences through analysing the text of the chosen authors, as well as their sources and models. There is to date no existing dedicated study comparing the two writers. The aim of this thesis is to fill that gap. Although both Adam and Gerald have received much attention from historians, neither an attempt to compare the ethnography and geography of the two regions of which they write has been undertaken, nor an attempt to understand why there are such differences between their depictions of peripheral peoples.

A model for this work is Sumithra David's thesis which compared manuscript transmission, dissemination and reception of Gerald of Wales *Topography* with William of Rubruck's *Itinerarium ad partes Orientales*, discussing various issues thematically.<sup>6</sup> Although these authors focussed on opposing ends of the periphery, they had similar approaches and interests, which made them worthy of being considered together. This thesis compares two authors who also focus on the periphery, in this case the west and north. By comparing these authors I will gain an insight into their significant differences as well as similarities, and how their viewpoints colours their narratives; research models that can be repeated with different authors and circumstances. It is a way to stand back and examine a larger picture, with the aim of better understanding of the past, and the way stereotypes are formed and shaped, a subject exceedingly relevant to our own time.

This thesis will explore classical and medieval sources and models in order to analyse the different attitudes of the writers, an approach that has not been attempted before. We need to ask why peoples in what were seen as similar geographical locations are treated so differently by writers whose ideas are shaped by the same classical literary influences, and, as will be argued, who display the same zeal for the reform and expansion of Christianity. Comparison is a good way to gain an understanding of an issue, in this case the depiction of peoples, and what the writers put their emphasis on. As Michael Richter pointed out, comparative studies are 'essential to see particular events in proportion.'<sup>7</sup> Chris Wickham elaborated on this issue: 'if

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<sup>4</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 131-146.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Richter, 'The Interpretation of Medieval Irish History,' *Irish Historical Studies* (1985) 289-298:292.

<sup>6</sup> Sumithra J. David, 'Looking East and West: The Reception and Dissemination of the Topographia Hibernica and the Itinerarium ad Partes Orientales in England [1185-1500],' PhD Thesis, University of St. Andrews, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Richter, 'The Interpretation of Medieval Irish History,' *Irish Historical Studies* (1985) 289-298:291.

you do not compare, you end up believing that one type of historical development is normal, normative, and that every other is a deviation.’<sup>8</sup> In this particular case we are in danger of seeing each representation as a standard, as if the authors had no choices.

Neither Adam’s positive image of Sweden and Norway nor Gerald’s negative representation of Ireland follows a set model for that time. This thesis seeks to show that Gerald’s depiction of the Irish, and Adam’s of the Swedes and Norwegians, are not obvious or inevitable. They had choices of models and sources to follow. Their views are a result of their individual circumstance, contexts and ideas. Their works are influential in shaping later representations of the peripheral peoples they portray. Adam’s depiction of the peoples of the north significantly influenced how they represented themselves in the early modern era.<sup>9</sup> Gerald’s account remained the definitive colonial English account of the Irish in the later medieval period and was still hugely influential in the early modern era. It became a yardstick for other colonial depictions of Ireland.<sup>10</sup> This investigation and analysis of Gerald’s and Adam’s work will attempt to enrich our understanding of representations these two peoples at the very limits of Europe. It will expand our knowledge of the role of contemporary circumstances and classical and late antique *topoi* in shaping stereotypes that continued into the early modern era and beyond.

We know very little about Adam (before 1050 to after 1076), a monk in Bremen. His *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* is divided into four books. Its Latin title suggests the deeds of the bishops: *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, a name first used by the

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<sup>8</sup> Chris Wickham, ‘Problems in Doing Comparative History,’ in Patricia Skinner (ed.), *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History, the Legacy of Timothy Reuter* (Turnhout, 2009) 5-28:6.

<sup>9</sup> On Adam of Bremen’s influence on later writers of history and geography: Kurt Johannesson, ‘Adam och Hednatemplet i Uppsala,’ *Adam av Bremen, Historien om Hamburgstiftet och dess Biskopar*, Emanuel Svenberg (tr.) with commentary by Carl Fredrik Hallencreutz, Kurt Johannesson, Tore Nyberg and Anders Piltz (Stockholm, 1984) 379-406.

<sup>10</sup> For Gerald’s influence see: Jason Harris, ‘A Case Study in Rhetorical Composition: Stephen White’s Two Apologiae for Ireland,’ in Keith Sidwell (ed.), *Making Ireland Roman: Irish Neo-Latin Writers and the Republic of Letters* (Cork, 2009) 126-153; Andrew Hadfield, ‘Crossing the Borders: Ireland and the Irish Between England and America,’ *Journal of Early Modern History* (May, 1999) 135-152; Hiram Morgan, ‘Giraldus Cambrensis and the Tudor Conquest of Ireland,’ in Hiram Morgan (ed.), *Political Ideology in Ireland 1541-1641* (Dublin, 1999) 22-44; J. Brannigan, ‘A Particular Vice of that People: Giraldus Cambrensis and the Discourse of English Colonialism,’ *Irish Studies Review* 6 (1998) 121-130:121; Hiram Morgan, ‘The Island Defenders: Humanist Patriots in Early Modern Iceland and Ireland,’ Centre for Neo-Latin Studies, cited 17/12/2007 [www.ucc.ie/acad/classics/CNLS/lectures/Morgan\\_iceland.html](http://www.ucc.ie/acad/classics/CNLS/lectures/Morgan_iceland.html); Elizabeth L. Rambo, *Colonial Ireland in English Medieval Literature* (Susquehanna, 1994); Jeanne-Marie Boivin, *L’Irlande au Moyen Age: Giraud de Barri et la Topographia Hibernica (1188)* (Paris, 1990) 64-68; W.R. Jones, ‘Giraldus Redivivus: English Historians, Irish Apologists, and the Works of Gerald of Wales,’ *Éire/Ireland* 9 (1974) 3-20. An example of an early modern historian commenting on Gerald: Geoffrey Keating, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn: The History of Ireland*, D. Comyn and P.S. Dineen (eds.), 4 Vols., *Irish Texts Society* (London, 1902-14) intro. III.

twelfth-century chronicler Helmold of Bosau.<sup>11</sup> Adam himself referred to ‘the history of the priests of this place’ in the prologue, and to the ‘history of the church at Hamburg’ in the beginning of the first chapter.<sup>12</sup> Adam’s *Gesta*—as any work of history in this era—should not be understood as an attempt at a neutral depiction, but as a compilation of information that implies a choice: Adam, like Gerald, chooses the deeds and actions that are thought to be worth retaining for posterity.<sup>13</sup> The first two books tell the story of the diocese of Hamburg-Bremen and its bishops in the larger context of imperial and local politics and the mission to convert polytheists (what Christians generally refer to as ‘pagans’) in eastern and northern Europe from c 780 until the succession of Adalbert to the bishopric in 1042. Book III concerns the period of Archbishop Adalbert’s rule from 1042 to his death in 1072. Book IV is entitled ‘a description of the islands of the north.’ It describes the geography and ethnography of a vast northern region from Greenland to Russia but particularly the area around the Baltic Sea: the area of missionary concern for the bishopric. The Swedes and Norwegians are the main subjects in Book IV.

Gerald of Wales (c.1146-1223) was a priest of a noble family of Welsh-Norman extraction.<sup>14</sup> His extended family played a leading colonising role in the English invasion of Ireland in 1169. His *Topography of Ireland* was first issued in 1188, but Gerald continued to add to his work.<sup>15</sup> This thesis uses the first recension, as it is closest to the events depicted. Later recensions add comments or notes but do not change the core ideas of the first version. The book is divided into three parts. The first part describes the geography of the island and includes a short bestiary; the second part relates the miracles and wonders of Ireland, whereas the third is devoted to its inhabitants and their origins. Of interest to this thesis is another of Gerald’s works, *The Conquest of Ireland* (1189), which describes the uncompleted English invasion of Ireland as it also gives us an insight into Gerald’s view of the Irish.<sup>16</sup> Of further interest is a map of the

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<sup>11</sup> Helmold of Bosau, *Helmoldi presbyteri bozoviensis chronica slavorum*, Bernhard Schmeidler (ed.) MGH SSrG 32 (Hannover and Leipzig 1909) 1.14; Volker Scior, *Das Eigene und das Fremde, Identität und Fremdheit in den Chroniken Adams von Bremen, Helmolds von Bosau und Arnolds von Lübeck* (Berlin, 2002) 29.

<sup>12</sup> ‘*Bremensium sive Hammaburgensium serie presulum*’ AB, prologue; ‘*Historia Hammaburgensis ecclesiae*,’ AB I, i.

<sup>13</sup> AB, Reuter’s intro. xi; Tore Nyberg, ‘Stad, skrift och stift, några historiska inledningsfrågor,’ in *Adam av Bremen, Historien om Hamburgstiftet och dess Biskopar*, Emanuel Svenberg (tr.) with commentary by Carl Fredrik Hallencreutz, Kurt Johannesson, Tore Nyberg and Anders Piltz (Stockholm, 1984) 295-339:296.

<sup>14</sup> Boivin, *L’Irlande au Moyen Age*, 14.

<sup>15</sup> On the manuscripts of the *Topography*: Nóirín Bríde Ní Bheaglaoi, ‘Editio anceps: the manuscript tradition of Giraldus Cambrensis’ *Topographia Hibernica*,’ PhD Thesis, University College Cork, 2011. On Gerald’s continued work on the *Topography* and its recensions: Boivin, *L’Irlande au Moyen Age*, 58f.

<sup>16</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, J.S. Brewer, J.F. Dimock and G.F. Warner (eds.), RS (London, 1861-1891); Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica, The Conquest of Ireland*, A.B. Scott and F.X. Martin (ed. and tr.) (Dublin, 1978). It will henceforth be abbreviated as *Expugnatio*.

western parts of Europe, inserted between these two manuscripts in the National Library MS 700, which may have been created by Gerald, or under his supervision.<sup>17</sup>

Knowledge of Adam's and Gerald's historical contexts and their key sources and models are vital for an understanding of their writings. There are many similarities between their circumstances, interests and cultural formation, which makes their contrasting depictions of the Swedes and Norwegians and the Irish all the more striking. They were highly educated priests discussing peoples whose nationality they did not share; they described nations who were viewed from a classical and medieval perspective as living on the periphery of Europe. This was a period of imperial expansion into peripheral regions by major European powers including Germany and England. Germany sought to extend its territory towards the east, the English westwards. The English kings of Norman ancestry had created an empire that covered a large part of westernmost Europe: parts of France as well as England and the wider Atlantic archipelago.<sup>18</sup>

In this era, ecclesiastical and secular events were interwoven. It is this complex contemporary context which shaped Adam's and Gerald's views of the people they represented. They lived in a period of massive Roman-led church reform, introduced to combat vice and promote new sexual and moral standards, and regulate the life of the laity and clergy as well as strengthen and expand papal authority and orthodox Christianity through conversion and crusades. Adam's *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* was written just before the power struggle between the empire and the papacy came to a peak under Pope Gregory VII (r. 1073-1085) and the German King Henry IV (r. 1050-1105). After centuries of weak leadership, the papacy reasserted its power.<sup>19</sup> The Pope claimed ultimate authority over the Emperor, and the right to appoint bishops, a task which in preceding centuries had fallen on kings. The German emperor in particular found it hard to accept politicised papal authority over secular rulers. The bishops of Hamburg-Bremen sided with the German emperor. Adam's work reflects the tension of the era, yet, he is silent on current affairs. This thesis will argue that Adam's ideal of pastoral care divides the secular from the ecclesiastical spheres: the model bishop should not involve himself in secular concerns. He wants to shift the focus from imperial politics to what is important to him: Christianity and the mission to evangelise the world.

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<sup>17</sup> Thomas O'Loughlin, 'An Early Thirteenth Century Map in Dublin: A Window into the World of Giraldus Cambrensis,' *Imago Mundi*, 51 (1999) 24-39.

<sup>18</sup> John Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire* (London, 2001).

<sup>19</sup> On papal reform: Gerd Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1993); I.S. Robinson, *The Papacy 1073-1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1990).

Gerald's *Topography* was written in the wake of the English invasion of Ireland. The invasion was sanctioned by the English Pope Adrian IV (r.1154-1159), who issued the decree *Laudabiliter*, which endorsed the English conquest of Ireland in the name of the Church and civilisation. Gerald's kin was involved from the very start of the attempted conquest of Ireland, thus Gerald was personally tied to the attempted conquest and he was in the employ of the English monarchy at the time he started writing the *Topography*.<sup>20</sup> Gerald was a fervent reformer. Models of pastoral care are evident in the *Topography* and in his later works, especially the *Jewel of the Church*.<sup>21</sup> Gerald's interest in reform also manifested itself in his zeal for the third crusade to save Jerusalem, in which he was briefly involved. The issue of reform as well as the colonising of Ireland impacts on Gerald's depiction of the Irish.

To understand Adam's account of the Swedes and Norwegians and Gerald's of the Irish we must also consider the classically inspired world-view inherited by them. Ancient and medieval representations of Sweden, Norway and Ireland share *topoi* common to representations of lands on the periphery of the world according to classical and medieval historiographical, geographical and ethnographical thought. According to these ancient ideas, Sweden, Norway and Ireland are seen as islands at the end of the earth, on the edge of a limitless Ocean. They are places of miracles and wonders, populated by barbarians and strange or monstrous peoples. For many classical authorities, distance from the centre, the core cultures of Greece and Rome, defined one's degree of civilisation: the further away, the more barbarous. Barbarians were seen as savage and ferocious people, living empty, disorganised, meaningless lives. But another strand of the classical tradition saw the periphery of the world as the location of an ideal place where good people lived in peace and harmony, shared what they had and disdained extravagance and excess. These divergent models continued with modifications into the literature of the Middle Ages. This thesis will argue that Adam and Gerald responded to these *topoi* but interpreted the information inherited from the classical world in the light of their own experiences and contemporary contexts.

This thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is entitled 'Adam and Gerald in the Context of Church Reform and Secular Expansion.' It will explore Adam's and Gerald's contemporary contexts as a significant factor in the choice of ancient stereotypes used in the representation of their respective peoples. The chapter will firstly examine Adam's context and

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<sup>20</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 20-21.

<sup>21</sup> *Gemma Ecclesiastica*, J.F. Dimock (ed.), RS, Vol.1 (London, 1861-1891); *The Jewel of the Church*, John J. Hagen. (tr.) (Leiden, 1979). See Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 32-34.

concerns, followed by Gerald's. It takes a historical literary approach: to understand the author we have to understand their context in order to gain insight into their respective agendas. The section on Adam will introduce Adam, the bishopric of Hamburg-Bremen and its missionary purpose: to convert north and east to Christianity. It will explore the wider context of the Investiture Controversy and imperial expansion, in which Adam's superior Archbishop Adalbert and Adalbert's successor Liemar were directly involved. Adam devotes an entire book to Adalbert, who played an important role in the German Empire as a political counsellor to the German emperors. Adam's view of imperial and papal power is a debated issue as a certain ambiguity in Adam's text renders various interpretations possible. Historians' responses range from those who believe that Adam fully supported his archbishop's politics, like Henrik Janson, to the absolute opposite, Aage Trommer, who believes Adam supported the reformist Pope Gregory VII.<sup>22</sup> Adam's ambiguity makes both interpretations possible as he does not clearly state his loyalty, not wishing to take a particular stand. Following his stance, this thesis will focus on the issues that Adam deems important. As his narrative indicates, his interests lay with pastoral care and with the ultimate global goal for Christianity, for the missions to reach the limits of the world. Hans-Werner Goetz and Tore Nyberg have argued that Adam's narrative was written in support of Hamburg-Bremen's special prerogative from Rome to convert the entire northern regions of Europe; this thesis demonstrates the emphasis Adam places on pastoral care to attain this goal, as well as highlighting the eschatological perspective.<sup>23</sup>

Adam's portrayal of Adalbert's character has also provoked scholarly comment; Adalbert is variously depicted as virtuous, bad and emotionally unstable, even contradictory.<sup>24</sup> Through a detailed analysis of the Adam's text Tim Barnwell explores the apparent contradictions and ambiguity of Adam's views in his recent PhD thesis.<sup>25</sup> Barnwell argues that Adam's

<sup>22</sup> Henrik Janson, *Templum Nobilissimum, Adam av Bremen, Uppsalatemplet och konfliktlinjerna i Europa kring år 1075* (Gothenburg, 1998); Aage Trommer, 'Komposition und Tendenz in der Hamburgischen Kirchengeschichte Adams von Bremens,' *Classica et Mediaevalia* 18 (1957) 207-257:255-257.

<sup>23</sup> Hans-Werner Goetz, 'Constructing the Past. Religious Dimensions and Historical Consciousness in Adam of Bremen's *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*,' in Lars Boje Mortensen (ed.), *The Makings of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom c. 1000-1300* (Copenhagen, 2006) 17-51:20; Nyberg, 'Stad, skrift och stift, 295-339:302. See also Michael Gelting, 'Elusive Bishops: Remembering, Forgetting, and Remaking the History of the Early Danish Church,' in Sean Gilsdorf (ed.), *The Bishop: Power and Piety at the First Millennium* (Münster, 2004) 169-200.

<sup>24</sup> See for example: Sverre Bagge, 'Deterioration of Character as Described by Adam of Bremen and Sturla Þórðarson,' in Jan A. Aertsen and Andreas Speer (eds.), *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1996) 530-548; Fabio Stok, 'Modelli e suggestioni sallustiane nella biografia dell'Arcivescovo Adalberto,' in Riccardo Scaria and Fabio Stok, (eds.) *Devotionis munus: La cultura e l'opera di Adamo di Brema* (Pisa, 2010) 79-100; Anders Piltz, 'Adam, Bibeln och auctores: en studie i litterär teknik,' in *Adam av Bremen*, Emanuel Svenberg (tr.) with commentary by Carl Fredrik Hallencreutz, Kurt Johannesson, Tore Nyberg and Anders Piltz (Stockholm, 1984) 342-353.

<sup>25</sup> Timothy Barnwell, 'Missionaries and Changing Views of the Other from the Ninth to the Eleventh Centuries' [http://www.academia.edu/12122273/Missionaries\\_and\\_Changing\\_Views\\_of\\_the\\_Other\\_from\\_the\\_Ninth\\_to\\_the\\_Eleventh\\_Centuries](http://www.academia.edu/12122273/Missionaries_and_Changing_Views_of_the_Other_from_the_Ninth_to_the_Eleventh_Centuries) cited 2.6.2015. See also, Timothy Barnwell, 'Fragmented Identities: Otherness and Authority in Adam of Bremen's

‘paradoxical account of Adalbert’s pontificate’ explores the many challenges facing the archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen, but that Adam’s *History* offers no solutions.<sup>26</sup> This thesis acknowledges the ambiguity and paradoxes that Barnwell describes, but argues that Adam has a purpose in his writing: providing positive and negative models of pastoral care. Sverre Bagge wrote of what he calls the ‘deterioration’ of Adalbert’s character, exploring Adam’s use of biblical and classical models for his depiction of Adalbert.<sup>27</sup> Bagge pointed out that ‘Adam’s description of Adalbert has an *exemplary* function;’ whereas Nyberg saw the portrait of Adalbert as a ‘mirror.’<sup>28</sup> This thesis will further investigate these arguments to demonstrate that in Adam’s view Adalbert had forgotten his most important role, as a pastor for his flock, and instead searched for power and glory at the imperial court. It will extend the exemplary function to include the entire *History* where Adalbert and other bishops’ adverse characteristics are held up as a negative example of pastoral care, a stark contrast to Adam’s ideal bishops and reform ideals, and to the piety and anti-materialistic living that characterises the peoples in Norway and Sweden in Adam’s account, a topic that chapter three will explore in detail.

Further dealing with the character of Adalbert, this thesis will briefly examine Adam’s use of Sallust’s characters, which mix virtue with evil, as models for his depiction of Adalbert.<sup>29</sup> In Adam’s depiction, Adalbert starts as a virtuous and gifted man, yet nuances in Adam’s account of Adalbert indicate that he attains nothing of real value. Adam describes him as close to a pagan in his attitudes and behaviour, a flawed person whose interest in secular affairs and search for personal glory drove the bishopric into poverty and turmoil. I am particularly influenced by Anders Piltz’ discussion on Adam’s use of Sallust. Examining Adam’s text and comparing it to Sallust, Piltz noted the similarity in character between protagonists in Sallust and those in Adam’s work; the mixture of positive and negative character traits in the same individual.<sup>30</sup> Building on his ideas, this thesis will further explore Adam’s use of Sallust’s protagonists for his characterisation of Adalbert.

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*History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*,’ in Clemens Gantner, Rosamond McKitterick and Sven Meeder (eds.), *The Resources of the Past in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 2015) 206-222.

<sup>26</sup> Barnwell, ‘Missionaries and Changing Views of the Other from the Ninth to the Eleventh Centuries,’ 122.

<sup>27</sup> Bagge, ‘Deterioration of Character as Described by Adam of Bremen and Sturla Þórðarson,’ 530-548.

<sup>28</sup> Bagge, ‘Deterioration of Character as Described by Adam of Bremen and Sturla Þórðarson,’ 530-548:534; Nyberg, ‘Stad, skrift och stift, 295-339:299.

<sup>29</sup> Adam’s use of Sallust in his portrayal of Adalbert, for both good and bad characteristics, has most recently discussed by Stok and Piltz. Stok, ‘Modelli e suggestioni Sallustiane nella biografia dell’Arcivescovo Adalberto,’ 79-100; Piltz, ‘Adam, Bibeln och auctores,’ 342-353:345-346.

<sup>30</sup> Anders Piltz, ‘Adam, Bibeln och auctores: en studie i litterär teknik,’ 342-353



This thesis will argue that reformist ideas, based on Adam's reading of Pope Gregory the Great (540-604), and Bede (673-735), are of key importance to understanding his representation of the northern world and the Swedes and Norwegians in particular.) I am indebted to Diarmuid Scully who encouraged me to pursue the interest Adam showed for Gregory the Great, and to compare Adam's reform ideals with those of Bede and Gregory. Also important for my reading of Adam (and Bede) is Jennifer O'Reilly, whose work on the reform agenda and exegesis in the *Ecclesiastical History* I encountered during lectures as well as through her written work, and Alan Thacker, who has investigated Bede's use of exegesis and patristic models—in particular that of Gregory the Great—in order to promote reform ideals. Thacker argues that 'all Bede's later writings were permeated with a vision of reform' in church and society and this vision is key to understanding Bede's later works.<sup>31</sup> Following Thacker and O'Reilly this thesis analyses Adam's work in the light of these reform ideals, noting key similarities: the importance of pastoral care, a bishop living as an example to his flock, attaining a balance between the secular and the spiritual life: ideas which are apparent also in Adam's work.<sup>32</sup>

The reform movement also looks back to ideas concerning an earlier age of the church, to the first Christian congregation in Jerusalem, where according to scripture, people lived simple unmaterialistic lives, sold their belongings and shared their resources, giving to each person according to their needs. For Adam, these ideals are represented by some of the early bishops of Hamburg-Bremen, especially Ansgar (801-865) and Rimbert (830-888). This thesis will argue that these ideals had not been attained by Adalbert, who, according to Adam, neglected his diocese for secular glory. On occasion, especially in relation to the northern missions, Adam acknowledges Adalbert's contribution, but largely the focus is on the negative aspects of Adalbert's personality. It is this negative side that serves as a warning to other bishops.

The second part of the first chapter will introduce Gerald and his context. It will explore the circumstances surrounding the English invasion of Ireland, which was sanctioned by the papacy with the justification that the nation needed reform of its church. It will briefly discuss the Norman conquest of England in the preceding century to demonstrate that reform through

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<sup>31</sup> Alan Thacker, 'Bede's Ideal of Reform,' Patrick Wormald (ed.), *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: studies presented to J.M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1983) 130-153:130.

<sup>32</sup> Thacker, 'Bede's Ideal of Reform,' 130-153; Jennifer O'Reilly, 'Islands and Idols at the Ends of the Earth: Exegesis and Conversion in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*,' in Stephane Lebecq, Michel Perrin and Olivier Szerwiniack (eds.), *Bède le vénérable. Entre tradition et posterité* (Lille, 2005) 119-145; Jennifer O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone: Topography, Exegesis and Identity of the *Angli* in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*,' in Jane Roberts and Leslie Webster (eds.), *Anglo-Saxon Traces* (Arizona Centre for Medieval Studies, 2011) 201-227.

conquest was not unusual, and by clergy at least, seen as an opportunity to correct corruption and misuse within the church. It will argue that the on-going English conquest of Ireland and the wider concerns of the day, church reform and crusades, are essential for understanding Gerald's depiction of the Irish. His view of the Irish is that of a coloniser, regarding the conquered nation as less civilised. This thesis will argue that Gerald saw the Irish conquest as necessary in order to implement reform of the Irish church. Whilst the Irish were Christians they had not yet, in his view, embraced reform. Therefore Gerald regarded them as sinful and depicted them according to the negative stereotype of ancient barbarians. Following John Gillingham, this thesis will refer to the forces invading and colonising Ireland as 'English,' the name used by Gerald, and other contemporary sources, for the invaders.<sup>33</sup> Gillingham argues that the terms 'Norman' and 'Anglo-Norman' were an invention of the Victorian era.<sup>34</sup> Gerald also at times uses the term British (*Britanniae*), for English individuals and for English kings, as Asa Mittman pointed out.<sup>35</sup>

In the sections on Gerald I have made much use of both Robert Bartlett's biography of Gerald of Wales and Jeanne-Marie Boivin's French translation of the *Topography* which includes chapters on Gerald's life and era, notes and commentary on sources; both contextualizes the *Topography*, making them invaluable tools to understand Gerald's work and his era.<sup>36</sup> The focus of scholarship and of this thesis has been on colonialism and imperialism in Gerald's work: there is general consensus among scholars that Gerald shaped the colonial discourse of 'otherness.' I am indebted to John Gillingham and Andrew Murphy for their research on this topic.<sup>37</sup>

Whilst there is no disagreement among historians on Gerald's role as a defender of the English conquest and the colonisation of Ireland, historians have different views of Gerald's character. H.E. Butler calls Gerald as 'brave and warm-hearted.' Cohen believes Gerald 'must of the have felt himself a monster' on account of his mixed background.<sup>38</sup> Mittman sees a 'tinge of self-

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<sup>33</sup> John Gillingham, 'Normanizing the English Invaders of Ireland,' Huw Pryce and John Watts (eds.), *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies* (Oxford, 2007) 85-97:85.

<sup>34</sup> Gillingham, 'Normanizing the English Invaders of Ireland,' 85-97.

<sup>35</sup> I am indebted to Mittman who pointed out that Gerald in some instances also use the term British, for example about a man who went on pilgrimage from Britain, and for current British kings, Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) (1905, Ontario, 2000) I.xxvi; III.viii.

<sup>36</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*; Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*.

<sup>37</sup> Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*; Andrew Murphy, *But the Irish Sea betwixt us: Ireland, Colonialism, and Renaissance Literature* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1999) 33-59; Brannigan, 'A Particular Vice of that People,' 121-130.

<sup>38</sup> J.J. Cohen, 'Hybrids, Monsters, Borderlands: The Bodies of Gerald of Wales,' in Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (ed.), *The Postcolonial Middle Ages* (New York, 2000) 85-103:76.

loathing' in his obsessive interest in hybrids, originating in his own mixed background, but that he is nevertheless also 'confident and boastful.'<sup>39</sup> Whilst this is not a subject of this thesis, it is briefly mentioned here because a reader's subjective experience of Gerald as a person—arrogant with a huge sense of entitlement or a more benign character, struggling with identity issues—will inevitably exert an influence on the reading of his text.

This thesis will highlight the crusades, another expression of reform, as fundamental for Gerald's depiction of the Irish. The first crusade had recaptured Jerusalem in 1099; now, less than a century later, Jerusalem was lost. King Henry II of England (r. 1154-1189), Gerald's superior, was asked to lead the crusade by the Patriarch of Jerusalem to recapture the city. Gerald has a complex relation to his king, he flatters and praises him in the *Topography*, but when he fails to lead the crusade he ultimately becomes a disappointment. To Gerald the king's lack of success in Ireland was God's punishment for his failure to lead the crusade. As a consequence, according to Gerald, the reform of the Irish church with its civilising benefits for the population had not taken place, which impacts negatively on his depiction of the Irish.

Having explored the context of the two writers in the first chapter, the subsequent chapters will analyse the authors' use of ancient images or stereotypes in depicting their respective peoples. When comparing and contrasting Adam's account of the peoples in Sweden and Norway with Gerald's account of the Irish, this thesis will use the same ethnographical structure and methodology which Gerald employs in his *Topography*. Here Gerald, following classical models, tells us he began to examine everything carefully: 'what was the position of the country, what was its nature, what was the origin of the race (*gentium originalem*), what were its customs.'<sup>40</sup> Adam's work, although not articulating this idea in such explicit words, works on a similar principle. Ancient works of ethnography and geography would invariably start with a

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<sup>39</sup> H.E. Butler speaks with glowing admiration of Gerald, see H.E. Butler's intro to Gerald of Wales, *The Autobiography of Giraldus Cambrensis*, H.E. Butler (tr. and ed., intro by C. H. Williams) (London, 1937; new ed. with 'A Guide to Further Reading' by John Gillingham, 2005) 23; in the same volume: John Gillingham, 'A Guide to Further Reading,' 369-373: 370, Gillingham of Gerald's brilliance as a writer; Asa Simon Mittman, 'The Other Close at Hand: Gerald of Wales and the 'Marvels of the West,' in Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills (eds.), *The Monstrous Middle Ages* (Cardiff, 2003) 97-112: 104-105.

<sup>40</sup> *Top.* prologue. Gerald uses the word '*gens*' which does not have the negative connotations of 'race. On the unsuitability of using the term 'race' see Asa Simon Mittman, 'Are the 'Monstrous Races' Races'?' *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies* 6 no. 1 (2015), 36-51:47-48. Forester translates it as 'tribes,' *Giraldus Cambrensis, The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) (1905, Ontario, 2000).

description of the location, as the position of the nation, its topography and nature would instantly indicate something about the character of the inhabitants and therefore their actions.<sup>41</sup>

Following this thematic approach, the second chapter of the thesis is entitled ‘Location.’ As well-educated priests, Adam and Gerald are knowledgeable on ancient views of geography through a host of classical and late antique sources, including the immensely influential Orosius (c. 385-420) and Isidore of Seville (d. 636).<sup>42</sup> The chapter will explore the locations of which they write through the medium of medieval maps as well as geographical and ethnographical texts from the classical to the medieval era.

For Adam and Gerald, the places of which they write are islands—to be specific, in the case of Adam, represented as islands—in a remote and dangerous Ocean, far from the centre of the world, Jerusalem. This remoteness from the centre of the world, carries with it certain characteristics, negative and positive, thus Adam and Gerald have choices in how to depict their respective regions. Both choose to represent their locations in the tradition of the classical *topos* of a *locus amoenus* (lovely place); they are fertile and blissful islands. The two authors also describe their locations as places of wonders and miracles, another ancient marker of a location situated at the physical limit of the world. Islands continued to be seen as remote, unusual and wondrous places throughout the Middle Ages, as evident in the descriptions in the fourteenth century travelogue by John Mandeville.<sup>43</sup> Regarding this section I want to especially mention the research by Naomi Reed Kline and Asa Mittman, which comprehensively explain ancient and medieval geography and emphasises the significance of islands in the Ocean and the Christian aspect of medieval maps.<sup>44</sup> Lectures and discussions with Diarmuid Scully were also invaluable for an understanding of Gerald ideas of location and its influence on Gerald’s depiction of the Irish inhabitants. A key argument in this chapter is Adam’s placing of Sweden and Norway in the context of islands in the Ocean, at a time when they are known to be situated on a peninsula. To represent Sweden and Norway in the context of islands in the Ocean is

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<sup>41</sup> These ancient ideas were expressed in Hippocrates, *Airs, Water, Places*, W.H.S. Jones (tr.), Vol. 1, LCL (Cambridge, MA., 1923). Discussion on Hippocrates’ climate theories in: Greg Woolf, *Tales of the Barbarians, Ethnography and Empire in the Roman West* (Chichester, 2011) 44f; John Block Friedman, ‘Monsters and the Earth’s Imagined Corners: Wonders and Discovery in the Late Middle Ages,’ in Leif Søndergård and Rasmus Thorning Hansen (eds.) *Monsters and Marvels and Miracles: Imaginary Journeys and Landscapes in the Middle Ages* (Odense, 2005) 41-64.

<sup>42</sup> Orosius, *The Seven Books of History Against the Pagans*, Roy Deferrari (tr.) (Washington DC., 1964). It will henceforth be abbreviated as *Hist. adv. paganos*; Isidore of Seville, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, Stephen A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach and Oliver Berghof (tr., intro and notes) (Cambridge, 2006). Hereafter abbreviated as *Etymologiae*.

<sup>43</sup> Isles with strange or wondrous qualities in chapters 18, 20, 21, 29, 31, 32, 34; John Mandeville, *Mandeville’s Travels*, M.C. Seymour (ed.) (Oxford, 1967).

<sup>44</sup> Naomi Reed Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford paradigm* (Woodbridge, 2001); Asa Simon Mittman, *Maps and Monsters in Medieval England* (New York, 2006).

important to Adam. In Christian narratives, conversion of Oceanic islands is linked to the fulfilment of biblical prophecy, ideas expounded on in the third chapter of the thesis.

The third chapter is entitled ‘Description of Peoples in Adam and Gerald: Responses to Ancient Stereotypes, Reform Agendas, Conversion and Salvation.’ It will consider Adam’s and Gerald’s responses to the ancient *topoi* concerning inhabitants of remote locations at the limits of the earth. Adam and Gerald are familiar with these ancient stereotypes from their knowledge of classical and late antique ethnographical and geographical authorities like Pliny, Solinus, Martianus Capella, and Isidore of Seville.<sup>45</sup> This chapter will focus on specific ethnographical issues: names and terms used to describe the nations, the origins of the peoples, religious life, physical appearance and characteristics, way of life, social organisation (aspects which are often intertwined). The first part of the chapter will deal with Adam, the second with Gerald.

This thesis argues that Adam equates the Swedes with the Goths, and associates them with the Christian conversion to the physical limits of the earth. The Goths, an ancient people who claimed their descent specifically from Scandza, an early name for Sweden, are a special people for Adam. This thesis will follow Per Stille’s research: through analysis of the names and terms Adam used for Sweden, he argued that from a missionary and prophetic viewpoint the terms ‘Goths’ and ‘Swedes’ are more or less synonyms.<sup>46</sup> Interpreting biblical prophecy regarding the Goths, this thesis connects the conversion of the Goths with the salvation of mankind and emphasises the importance of Christian eschatological thought in Adam’s narrative. It will argue that Adam, like Gregory the Great and Bede, foresaw the imminent end of the world when conversion had reached all nations, the main goal of the Christian Church. Once this purpose is accomplished a period of chaos and destruction precedes the Second Coming of Christ and the Day of Judgement, when Christ will divide the faithful from the sinners and establish a New Heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* (The Natural History), H. Rackham, W.H.S. Jones and D.E. Eichholz (eds.) LCL, 10 Vols. (London, 1938-63), hereafter abbreviated as *NH.*; Gaius Julius Solinus, *Collectanea rerum memorabilium*, T. Mommsen (ed.) (Berlin, 1985, reprinted Berlin, 1958), abbreviated as *Collectanea*; Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, Adolf Dick (ed.) (Leipzig, 1925); *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts*, Vol. 1 (introduction, sources and notes) Vol. 2 (the work in translation) William Harris Stahl and Richard Johnson (tr.) with E.L. Burge (New York, 1971-1977), henceforth abbreviated as *De Nuptiis*.

<sup>46</sup> Per Stille, ‘Adam av Bremens användande av termen goter,’ *Fornvännen* 83 (1988) 104-107: 106.

<sup>47</sup> Primary source, see for example Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, B. Dombart and A. Kalb (eds.), CCSL 47-48 (Turnhout, 1955); *City of God*, Marcus Dods (tr.), NPNF First Series Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, 1971) Book 20. See also Peter Darby, *Bede and the End of Time* (Farnham, 2012); Hans-Werner Goetz, ‘The Concept of Time in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries,’ in Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried and Patrick J. Geary (eds.), *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography* (Cambridge, 2002) 139-166:164f; Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1979).

Jennifer O'Reilly, and recently also Peter Darby, have shown the importance of this issue in Bede's writing. In her analysis of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Jennifer O'Reilly demonstrated the importance of islands in the treatment of salvation history.<sup>48</sup> Bede thought that he lived in the last period of history now that the English were in the process of conversion.<sup>49</sup> This thesis will argue that Adam's eschatological thought regarding the people of the north is in essence the same as that of Bede's in relation to England. Historians have only briefly touched on this subject. Hans-Werner Goetz pointed out that all medieval history is salvation history and that the idea of salvation is 'presupposed but not expanded in Adam's chronicle.'<sup>50</sup> Ildar Garipzanov suggested that Adam's narrative has eschatological overtones, citing the mention of Gog and Magog and his inclusion of the monstrous peoples, which serves as a reminder of the peripheral location.<sup>51</sup> This thesis seeks to build on the research of Ian Wood who argues that a biblical citation in Rimbert's *Life of Ansgar* places the mission of Ansgar in an eschatological context.<sup>52</sup> Following Wood, this thesis interprets Adam's use of a biblical prophecy in a comparable manner: that for Adam the conversion of the north will lead to the salvation of mankind.

Adam presents the Swedes and Norwegians as idealised peoples, a classical stereotype of the pious, peaceful contented barbarian, an ideal people to convert. They are a contrast to the effectively bad 'pagan' behaviour of Adalbert and his court. Recently David Fraesdorff has focussed on ethnic stereotypes and ideas of peripheral areas as a negative 'other.'<sup>53</sup> He analyses descriptions of 'north'—at this time a name used for an immense region north of Germany, stretching from Russia in the east to Greenland in the west—in several medieval chroniclers from the ninth to the twelfth century, to find that the area is generally depicted in a hostile

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<sup>48</sup> O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,' 201-227; O'Reilly, 'Islands and Idols at the Ends of the Earth: Exegesis and Conversion in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*,' 119-145.

<sup>49</sup> O'Reilly, 'Islands and Idols at the Ends of the Earth,' 119-145; O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone: Topography,' 201-227; Darby, *Bede and the End of Time*.

<sup>50</sup> Goetz, 'Constructing the Past. Religious Dimensions and Historical Consciousness in Adam of Bremen's *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*,' 17-51:24.

<sup>51</sup> Ildar H Garipzanov, 'Christianity and Paganism in Adam of Bremen's Narrative,' Ildar H. Garipzanov (ed.), *Historical Narratives and Christian Identity on a European Periphery::Early History Writing in Northern, East-Central, and Eastern Europe (c. 1070-1200)* (Turnhout, 2011) 13-29.

<sup>52</sup> Ian Wood, 'The Ends of the Earth: The Bible, Bibles and the Other in Early Medieval Europe,' Mark Vessey et. al. *The Calling of the Nations: Exegesis, Ethnography, and Empire in a Biblical-Historical Present* (Toronto, 2010) 200-216:206.

<sup>53</sup> See also Torstein Jørgensen, 'The Land of the Norwegians is the Last in the World: A Mid Eleventh-Century Description of the Nordic Countries from the Pen of Adam of Bremen,' in Gerhard Jaritz and Juhan Kreem (eds.), *The Edges of the World* (Budapest, 2009) 46-54; Ian Wood, 'The Northern Frontier: Christianity Face to Face with Paganism,' in Thomas F. X. Noble and Julia M. H. Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, Vol. 3, *Early Medieval Christianities* (Cambridge, 2008) 230-246, notes 695-697; Leif Søndergaard, 'At the Edge of the World: Early Medieval Ideas of the Nordic Countries,' in Lars Bisgaard, Carsten Selch Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen and John Lind (eds.), *Medieval Spirituality and Europe: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Tore Nyberg*, (Odense, 2001) 51-71.

manner, although less so in Adam's narrative, where this applies only to the periphery of the nations Adam describes.<sup>54</sup> Fraesdorff acknowledges a certain ambivalence in Adam's work; north is depicted as both evil as well as paradisiacal.<sup>55</sup> Yet he argues that Adam's more positive image of the north is overshadowed by Adam's linking the north with Scythia, which Fraesdorff argues represents an utterly barbaric place.<sup>56</sup> My thesis argues that Adam's narrative links the north with Scythia, but that for Adam Scythia is an idealised place of morality and simplicity of living.<sup>57</sup>

In the early parts of his narrative, when describing the previous centuries of history in the region, Adam's depiction of the Swedes and Norwegians corresponds to the classical negative image of a barbarian. Yet, for the Swedes and Norwegians of his own era Adam ignores this medieval image of the people of the north as savages. Following a classical *topos* of people in peripheral locations he portrays them as pious and contented, with a lifestyle reminiscent of Adam's ideal community, that of the early church. For Adam the 'other' is not a hostile alien, but a prospective member of the church community. In almost every aspect, from origins to lifestyle and social organisation, Adam shows a positive image of the Swedes and Norwegians.

Unlike Adam, who expresses a positive stance towards the Swedes and Norwegians, Gerald represents a Christian people, the Irish, in the negative mould of ancient barbarians. Classical sources routinely express hostility to the Irish but in the early Middle Ages this image changed when the Irish became Christian, and especially after they engaged in missionary activity in England and continental Europe.<sup>58</sup> The new positive image was represented by, for example,

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<sup>54</sup> David Fraesdorff, *Der barbarische Norden* (Berlin, 2005). He analyses the image of north in Rimbert (830-880), Thietmar of Merseberg (975-1018), Helmold of Bosau (c 1120-1177) and Adam of Bremen.

<sup>55</sup> Fraesdorff, *Der Barbarische Norden*, 309.

<sup>56</sup> Fraesdorff, *Der barbarische Norden*, 292.

<sup>57</sup> T.E.J. Weidemann, 'Barbarians in Ammianus Marcellinus,' in I.S. Moxton, J.D. Smart and A.J. Woodman (eds.), *Past Perspectives: Studies in Greek and Roman Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 1986) 189-201:192. Peripheral peoples as just: John Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World* (New York, 1975) 17-18. For positive as well as negative sources on Scythians: Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (New York, 1965; first printed 1935) 315-344.

<sup>58</sup> See sources collected in Philip Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World* (Austin, 2001). See also: Diarmuid Scully, 'Location and Occupation: Bede, Gildas and the Roman Vision of Britain' in J. Roberts and L. Webster (eds.), *Anglo-Saxon Traces* (Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011) 243-272; Paul T. Keyser, 'Greek Geography of the Western Barbarians,' in Larissa Bonfante (ed.), *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe, Realities and Interactions* (Cambridge, 2011) 37-70; J.F. Killeen, 'Ireland in the Greek and Roman Writers,' *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 76C (1976) 207-215; Diarmuid Scully, 'Christians, Pagans and Barbarians: The Irish in Giraldu Cambrensis and the Graeco-Roman Sources,' in Florence Bourgne, Leo Martin Carruthers and Arlette Sancery (eds.), *Un espace colonial et ses avatars: naissance d'identités nationale: Angleterre, France, Irlande (Ve-XVe siècles)* (Paris, 2008) 49-62; David Rankin, *Celts and the Classical World* (London, 1987).

Bede who admired Irish Christianity.<sup>59</sup> Gerald ignores this positive image to revert to the ancient model of the Irish as savage barbarians. Gerald's use of a moral agenda to discredit the Irish is a subject well established by historians.<sup>60</sup> This thesis will emphasise Gerald's use of classical stereotypes in the depiction of the Irish. On this subject this thesis is indebted to Diarmuid Scully's research on the use of classical stereotypes of barbarians on the western fringes of the world.<sup>61</sup> Following his research this thesis puts emphasis on the use of classical stereotypes of barbarians for depictions of populations in late antique and medieval narratives.

For Gerald, every aspect of his depiction of Ireland endorses his colonial viewpoint. The names and origins of the Irish support his theory that the Kings of Britain have an old claim to the country. In the section on religion, we will see how Gerald supports the English invasion of Ireland based on the supposed necessity of reform. He depicts the Irish church as unreformed, its bishops as failing to correct the errors of the people. Having read St Bernard's *Life of Malachy*, which describes the reform process in Ireland, Gerald is well aware of the Irish reform movement.<sup>62</sup> Yet his account ignores evidence that reform of the Irish church has taken place, as the perceived barbarism of the Irish offers the justification for the conquest. I have followed the research of Diarmuid Scully to argue that Bernard of Clairvaux's depiction of the Irish is template for Gerald's depiction of the Irish as barbarians. Marie-Therese Flanagan, whose work describes the reform process in Ireland, formed my views on the Irish church in the twelfth century and the Irish reform movement, which Gerald denies in his work.<sup>63</sup> By emphasising the barbaric aspects of their appearance, lifestyle and social organisation, Gerald argues that the Irish are in need of the civilising influence of the English. Thus, although Adam's and Gerald's ideals of pastoral care are similar there is a stark contrast in the way they portray their respective populations. For Adam the reform ideals represent a way of life that is already established in the north, whilst for Gerald the reform ideal are a contrast to the Irish way of living.

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<sup>59</sup> Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, B. Colgrave and R.A. Mynors (ed. and tr.) (Oxford, 1969, repr. with corrections, 1991) 580. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* will henceforth be abbreviated as *HE* (*Historia Ecclesiastica*)

<sup>60</sup> See for example: Laura Cleaver, 'Kings Behaving Badly: Images of Rulers in Gerald of Wales' Works on Ireland (c. 1200),' *Ikon* 5 (2012) 151-160; Scully, 'Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,' 49-62; John Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity, and Political Values* (Woodbridge, 2000); Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*: 33-59; Brannigan, 'A Particular Vice of that People,' 121-130; F.X. Martin, 'Gerald of Wales, Norman Reporter on Ireland,' *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 58, no. 231 (1969) 279-292.

<sup>61</sup> Scully, 'Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,' 49-62; Diarmuid Scully, 'Proud Ocean has Become a Servant: A Classical *topos* in the Literature on Britain's Conquest and Conversion,' in Elizabeth Mullins and Diarmuid Scully (eds.), *Listen, O Isles, Unto Me: Studies in Medieval Word and Image in Honour of Jennifer O'Reilly* (Cork, 2011) 3-15; 313-318 (notes); Scully, 'Location and Occupation: Bede, Gildas and the Roman Vision of Britain,' 243-272. For further articles, see bibliography.

<sup>62</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.) (Kalamazoo, 1978).

<sup>63</sup> Marie-Therese Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge, 2010).



The fourth chapter is entitled ‘Adam’s and Gerald’s Strange and Monstrous Peoples.’ It examines Adam’s and Gerald’s views of the unusual peoples that ancient narratives place at the physical limits of the world. These peoples are often divergent in appearance, sometimes half human-half animal. These monstrous peoples can be monstrous in looks, or look normal but be monstrous in their habits, like those who are cannibals. What is considered normal/monstrous varies from culture to culture: ‘Each culture has its own preoccupations and fears, its own definition of ‘normal,’ its own manner of looking at reality,’ often defined against what is abnormal or monstrous.<sup>64</sup> The question of what defines a monster is a subject of current scholarly discussion.<sup>65</sup>

The strange peoples known from ancient narrative—some fabled and mythical—were transmitted into the Middle Ages; Adam places some of them in his narrative. His bishopric is reaching out to places so remote that they may meet these peoples. This thesis will consider the status of the strange and monstrous people, are they human or animals? It acknowledges Asa Mittman’s and Susan Kim’s argument that there is no sharp division between ‘monstrous’ and ‘normal’ in this era.<sup>66</sup> Adam does not separate them. His message regarding the monstrous peoples and regular inhabitants on the periphery is the same: his inclusive view of all God’s creation mirrors his concern for world salvation. In contrast, Gerald places monstrous individuals in Ireland within the general population. These monstrous beings are born out of bestial intercourse. Using an ancient *topos* of prodigies or monstrous as portents, they are signs of the immorality of the Irish and serve as warnings for the English: a representation that fits his colonising agenda. This thesis follows Catherine Karkov and Rhonda Knight, for whom Gerald’s story of what he calls a ‘talking wolf’ emphasises the colonial context of Gerald’s narrative.<sup>67</sup> Andrew Murphy and Asa Simon Mittman drew attention to the positive rendering of the ‘wolves’ in the story, which also will be discussed.<sup>68</sup> However, in spite of Gerald’s

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<sup>64</sup> D. Felton, ‘Rejecting and Embracing the Monstrous in Ancient Greece and Rome,’ in Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous* (Farnham, 2012) 103-131:103. See also Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills, ‘Introduction: Conceptualizing the Monstrous,’ in *The Monstrous Middle Ages* in Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills (eds.), *The Monstrous Middle Ages* (Cardiff, 2003) 1-27; Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 26.

<sup>65</sup> Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, ‘Monster Culture (Seven Theses),’ in Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (ed.), *Monster Theory, Reading Culture* (Minneapolis, 1996) 3-25; Debra Higgs Strickland, ‘Introduction: The Future is necessarily Monstrous,’ *Different Visions: A Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art* 2 (2010) 1-13: 8-9.

<sup>66</sup> Asa Simon Mittman and Susan M. Kim, *Inconceivable Beasts: The Wonders of the East in the Beowulf Manuscript* (Tempe, 2013) 171-180.

<sup>67</sup> Catherine E. Karkov, ‘Tale of the Ancients: Colonial Werewolves and the Mapping of Postcolonial Ireland,’ Patricia Clare Ingham and Michelle R. Warren, *Post-Colonial Moves- Medieval through Modern* (2003) 93-109; Rhonda Knight, ‘Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles: Representing Colonial Fantasies in Gerald of Wales’s ‘Topographia Hibernica,’ *Studies in Iconography* 22 (2001) 55–86;

<sup>68</sup> Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 53; Asa Simon Mittman, ‘The Other Close at Hand: Gerald of Wales and the ‘Marvels of the West,’’ 97-112: 104.

apparent sympathy for strange or hybrid beings, their purpose is clear; to show the Irish as deviant. I am indebted to John Block Friedman's work which deals with Graeco-Roman and medieval monster traditions which found that 'monstrous' does not only apply to appearance but also behaviour, noted the varying status of individual monstrous peoples, and that some of these peoples are especially close to God.<sup>69</sup> I have followed Naomi Reed Kline in her use of term 'strange and monstrous' which is more inclusive, and less loaded with expectation of hideousness than 'monsters' or 'monstrous.'<sup>70</sup>

As will be apparent from my earlier remarks, of key importance to this thesis is the work of Jennifer O'Reilly. Her research shows the importance of conversion of remote Oceanic isles in the context of providential history.<sup>71</sup> I also had the great fortune to attend her lectures and thus be inspired by her great knowledge and not the least her enthusiasm for the subject. To Diarmuid Scully I am especially indebted as his lectures introduced me to Gerald of Wales and also to the intricacies and complexity of medieval geography, all of which have a significant impact in this thesis. Through discussions he allowed me to partake of his yet unpublished work, which enabled me to create a more nuanced picture of Gerald.

I also want to especially mention Debra Strickland, who explains how the tradition of the monstrous peoples became a blueprint for the 'condemnation and exclusion of real-world non-Christian cultural outsiders,' and Asa Simon Mittman, who convincingly shows that these stereotypes are with us today, making the study of the monstrous relevant to our own era.<sup>72</sup> This thesis also deals with medieval stereotypes that have cast long shadows into the present. It integrates several distinct fields of scholarship in an attempt to synthesise a coherent understanding of representations of peripheral peoples in the northern and western fringes of the world as represented in the narratives of two clerics near each other in time, one in the eleventh and the other in the twelfth century. It attempts to demonstrate the continuing influence of classical stereotypes, negative and positive, into medieval times and draw attention to the circumstances and the medieval context in which these stereotypes emerged.

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<sup>69</sup> John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought* (Harvard, 1981).

<sup>70</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 141.

<sup>71</sup> O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,' 201-227; O'Reilly, 'Islands and Idols at the Ends of the Earth: Exegesis and Conversion in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*,' 119-145.

<sup>72</sup> Debra Strickland Higgs, 'Monstrosity and Race in the Late Middle Ages,' Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous* (Farnham, 2012) 365-386:366; Asa Simon Mittman, 'Introduction: The Impact of Monsters and Monster Studies,' *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous* (Farnham, 2012) 1-14:13-14.

## Chapter 1

### Adam and Gerald in the Context of Church Reform and Secular Expansion

#### Introduction

When Adam of Bremen describes the people of Sweden and Norway, and Gerald of Wales describes the people of Ireland, they are not only inspired by classical depictions of the inhabitants of these regions but also responding to contemporary circumstances. The political and ecclesiastical contexts in which they find themselves influences how they interpret the ancient models of depicting peoples in peripheral locations. It is therefore necessary to know the contexts which formed their respective views before investigating their representations of the inhabitants of these places. These circumstances are different for each of the authors but one issue is vital for both of them: church reform. This chapter will examine the authors and their concerns separately; first Adam, followed by Gerald.

Adam wrote the *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* in the years immediately following the death of his archbishop, Adalbert (r. 1043-1072), dedicating his work to Adalbert's successor Liemar (r. 1072-1101). The longest book of the narrative, Book III, is entirely taken up by a depiction of the recently deceased Adalbert and his era. Adalbert had been an immensely powerful person as political counsellor to two successive German kings: briefly during the reign of Henry III (r.1028-1056), then at the court of Henry IV (r. 1056-1105). In spite of Adalbert's elevated position, Adam is critical of what he sees as his greed and ambition. Adam's portrayal of Adalbert is essential for an understanding of Adam's ideals of reform and missionary work and for his portrayal of the remote and monstrous peoples in Book IV of his narrative, topics which are discussed in chapter three and four of this thesis. Adalbert—in Adam's depiction a complex person with both positive and negative characteristics—is depicted as even stranger in his behaviour than the monstrous people of the north, who are portrayed as innocent people awaiting conversion and represented as living lifestyles similar to that of the early church, Adam's ideal.

Bede, the respected Northumbrian monk, historian and exegete, whose reform ideals were inspired by Gregory the Great, is of particular importance to Adam.<sup>1</sup> Adam, like Bede and Gregory, admired the simple lifestyle of the early apostolic church. Their writings often convey examples of pastoral care to emulate. They also represent the simple and unmaterialistic lifestyle of the early church as an ideal to be imitated now, in their own time. In Adam's narrative, the ideal pastors are personified by two of the early bishops of Hamburg-Bremen, Ansgar (831-865) and Rimbert (865-888). These exemplary bishops started Christian missions in Sweden and are hailed by Adam as heroes of missionary endeavour as well as models of pastoral care.

The section on Adam starts with an introduction to Adam, his work, and the immediate context of the missionary bishopric of Hamburg-Bremen. It examines Adam's purpose in writing and argues that a major objective in Adam's narrative is to provide positive models of pastoral care for Liemar as well as for later bishops. It will also consider Adam's ideals on pastoral care, and Adam's negative model, Adalbert. This thesis briefly examines the portrayal of the character of Adalbert and discusses the moralist and Roman senator and historian Sallust (86-35 BC) as a literary model for Adam.<sup>2</sup> Sallust takes a stand against immorality, hunger for power, and greed, as does Adam. We will discuss Adam's contradictory image of Adalbert and argue that Adam's rare praise of him relates to the missions, for Adam an issue of critical importance. Adam's portrayal of Adalbert is fundamentally negative as he represents the opposite of the values of Bede and Gregory the Great. Adalbert's glorious secular career means nothing to Adam; he is a man who had neglected his spiritual life as well as the foremost duty of a bishop, that of looking after his flock.

Gerald's context of conquest, reform and crusades is essential for understanding Gerald of Wales's depiction of the Irish. In Britain and Ireland, like Adam's Germany, ecclesiastical and secular interests were interwoven in the politics of the day. Unlike Adam, Gerald was directly involved in the politics of his era. When Gerald wrote the first recension of the *Topography* (1188), Ireland was in the process of being colonised

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<sup>1</sup> For Bede's era, see Patrick Wormald, *The Times of Bede, 625-865: Studies in Early English Christian Society and its Historian* (Oxford, 2004). On Bede's inspiration from Gregory see: Alan Thacker, 'Bede's Ideal of Reform,' in Patrick Wormald (ed.), *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J.M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1983) 130-153:134f.

<sup>2</sup> On Sallust see Ronald Syme, *Sallust* (Cambridge, 1964).

and conquered by the English, a venture wholly supported by Gerald, who dedicated his work to the English king Henry II (1133-1189). Gerald's own family was directly involved from the very start of this conquest. This thesis follows the general consensus among historians that Gerald views the inhabitants of Ireland as unsophisticated and uncivilised.<sup>3</sup>

The immediate context of Gerald's narrative is the English invasion of Ireland. Not long before the invasion, the English were granted papal approval for the conquest by an English pope. It was justified by the perceived necessity of reform of the Irish church. The Norman conquest of England a century earlier was also sanctioned by the pope. These issues will be briefly examined because of their similarity: they were both an excuse for a nation that thought itself as more civilised to conquer a foreign territory. Both had papal approval for their conquests from a papacy that claimed jurisdiction over islands since the time of Constantine.

The reform of the Irish church was important to Gerald, but for him, as for most of Christendom, the key international issue was the crusade to liberate Jerusalem. Gerald saw the crusades as an occasion for England, a nation that in the Middle Ages was seen as located on the periphery of the world, to assist in a crisis involving the centre of the world, Jerusalem. Gerald's king did not participate, and because of the failure to assist in the crusades, Gerald argued that English did not deserve a full victory in Ireland. This colonial and reform context of the *Topography* influences Gerald's depiction of the Irish.

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<sup>3</sup> See for example Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*; Brannigan, 'A Particular Vice of that People,' 121-130; F.X. Martin, 'Gerald of Wales, Norman Reporter on Ireland,' 279-292.

## Adam of Bremen: A Brief Portrait

The little we know of Adam can be gathered from the sparse personal information he gives us in his only known narrative, *The History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*.<sup>4</sup> No one wrote of his life, nor did he write of it himself, or such texts are no longer extant. He remains largely anonymous, as he had wished to be. In the prologue Adam describes himself as the ‘least of all canons of the holy Church,’ following the medieval humility *topos*.<sup>5</sup> Death records from Bremen, (which does not give the year of his death), names him as *Magister*, thus we can gather he was a teacher at the cathedral school there.<sup>6</sup> His use of the humility *topos* conveys the suggestion that he does not want personal praise as an author, but instead wants to focus the reader’s attention on his message. Whilst we are uncertain of his exact status he portrayed himself as an anonymous and humble monk who does not seek personal glory or fame. He did not even write his name on his manuscript. His name is known to us through a later chronicler; Adam simply used the capital A to indicate his name.<sup>7</sup> There are no likenesses or sculptures from the period depicting Adam, his death was not recorded, his grave not marked, nor did anyone write a moving death scene such as was bestowed upon Bede.<sup>8</sup>

Adam is of German extraction; he has no Swedish or Norwegian blood and is thus not defending these nations because of personal connections when depicting them in a positive manner. In addition, there is no evidence that he ever visited Sweden or Norway. We know that Adam was not from Bremen as he calls himself ‘proselyte and stranger’ in the prologue.<sup>9</sup> He arrived there in 1066 or 1067, which can be inferred from Adam’s own words. The work on the church in Bremen, which Adalbert had started when consecrated bishop, had ‘stayed unfinished until the archbishop’s twenty-fourth year when also I, most unworthy servant of the Church of God, came to

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<sup>4</sup> There is no extant original MS of Adam’s church history. Schmeidler’s edition is an amalgamation of all known manuscripts. Nyberg, ‘Stad, skrift och stift,’ 295-339:302. On the manuscript tradition of Adam’s work see A.K.G. Kristensen, *Studien zur Adam von Bremen Überlieferung* (Copenhagen, 1975); résumé in Danish, 207-212.

<sup>5</sup> For humility in a monk see Chapter 7 of St Benedict’s Rules. *The Rule of St Benedict*, Boniface Verheyen (tr.) (Atchison, Kansas, 1949).

<sup>6</sup> *AB*, intro. xxviii.

<sup>7</sup> Helmold of Bosau supplied the name Adam, *AB*, intro. xxv; Helmold of Bosau, *Helmoldi presbyteri bozoviensis chronica slavorum*, Bernhard Schmeidler (ed.), 1.14.

<sup>8</sup> Cuthbert wrote *Epistola de obitu Bedae*. In *Bede, HE*. p.580.

<sup>9</sup> *AB*, prologue.

Bremen.<sup>10</sup> It seems likely that he was from the southern part of Germany.<sup>11</sup> He had a high level of education, which can be discerned from the many classical sources he uses. In his narrative there are references or quotes from more than nineteen classical authors including Sallust, Lucan, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal and Virgil.<sup>12</sup> He also has a thorough knowledge of scripture and patristic sources and was familiar with medieval authors such as Einhard (775-840), Charlemagne's biographer, and Bede.<sup>13</sup> He may have studied at Bamberg, the only centre for higher education in Germany. Germans, if not going to Bamberg, travelled to Paris, Bologna or Padua.<sup>14</sup> Another of Adam's sources is the Danish king Svein (r. 1047-1073). From Adam's narrative we can gather that he travelled to Denmark and met with the Danish king who supplied him with information on the history as well as the ethnography and geography of the north. It is possible that Adam's standing was sufficiently high in his own diocese that he was considered as successor to the archbishopric after Adalbert died in 1072. Swedish historians have suggested this on the basis of a couple of lines in the epilogue poem that ends Adam's narrative. The lines are obscure and open to interpretation.<sup>15</sup> We do not know when Adam died, but his narrative was finished sometime in 1076; no events later than this are mentioned.<sup>16</sup> He may have died 1081 or 1085, since up to that date scholia were added to the text although no new contemporaneous events introduced.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *AB* III, iv.

<sup>11</sup> *AB*, Schol. 151 tells us: 'It is evident here that the writer of this little book was from upper Germany [Oberdeutschland, i.e. southern Germany] because in an effort to adapt very many words and proper nouns to his own language he corrupted them for us.' Nyberg suggests that he was specifically chosen by Adalbert for the purpose of composing the history of the bishoprics. Nyberg, 'Stad, skrift och stift,' *Adam av Bremen*, 295-339: 295.

<sup>12</sup> On classical education in western Europe see L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford, 1991) 79-121.

<sup>13</sup> Adam cites liberally from the *Life of Charlemagne*, for example in the very first paragraph of his narrative, *AB* I.i. Citations or references to Bede in *AB* IV, xxxvi. Schol. 19 is a citation from *HE*. I,1.

<sup>14</sup> Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (London, 1953) 57.

<sup>15</sup> '*Quem nam preterit felix electio, qua te prisco more patrum pastoris nomine dignum electumque.*' Epilogue, *Adam Bremensis*. In the *Adam av Bremen* this is translated as 'jag som vid valet av dej till evinnerlig lycka blev ratad' ('I that fortunately was rejected when you were elected'). Tchan has interpreted the same lines as: 'Not out of mind has passed, indeed, Thy fortunate selection.' *AB*, Epilogue.

<sup>16</sup> In the beginning of Adam's narrative Svein Estrithson is alive but he has passed away at the end of chapter II where Svein is described as the 'long to be remembered king of the Danes.' *AB* II, xLiii. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle puts Svein Estrithson's death in the year of 1076. *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle*, Dorothy Whitelock, David C. Douglas, Susie I. Tucker (tr. and eds.) (London, 1961).

<sup>17</sup> *AB*, intro xii. The scholia are published after each book in *Adam av Bremen* with discussion and notes; further discussion of the scholia in Nyberg, 'Stad, skrift och stift,' *Adam av Bremen*, 295-339:302f.

## The Immediate Context: Archbishop Adalbert and Internal Crisis in Hamburg-Bremen

The bishopric of Bremen, on the North Sea coast of Saxony, was founded by Charlemagne in the late eighth century in a newly converted area.<sup>18</sup> The bishopric of Hamburg, a short distance north east of Bremen, was established in 831 by Louis the Pious. When Hamburg was destroyed by the Norse in 845 and for a time abandoned, the bishopric of Hamburg was amalgamated with the earlier bishopric of Bremen.<sup>19</sup> Helmod of Bosau, writing a century later from a nearby town, tells us this was done so that the two cities would be able to support each other in times of danger.<sup>20</sup> It was situated in a Christian region, but as it bordered non-Christian territory both to the north and to the east, it was in a precarious position. It also had a special privilege; as Adam tells us, it was to be 'the metropolitan see for all the barbarous nations of the Danes, the Swedes, and likewise the Slavs and the other peoples living round about.'<sup>21</sup> Its mission was to convert polytheists in these areas, a point that Adam emphasises. In his prologue statement he refers to the bishop of Hamburg-Bremen's hereditary commission to preach in 'all the length and breadth of the North.'<sup>22</sup> When Adam speaks of hereditary he refers to papal letters from the ninth century in which Hamburg-Bremen's authority over the northern region was stated.<sup>23</sup>

At the time of Adam's writing, Adam tells us that Hamburg-Bremen was in crisis. To Adam, the crisis was the result of Archbishop Adalbert's neglect of his diocese, his excessive involvement with the German imperial court, and his role in exacerbating a

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<sup>18</sup> Destruction of Hamburg, *AB*, I, xxi.

<sup>19</sup> Amalgamation with Bremen in 845, *AB*, I, xxiv.

<sup>20</sup> Helmod of Bosau, *Helmoldi presbyterii bozoviensis chronica slavorum*, Bernhard Schmeidler (ed.), 1.5.

<sup>21</sup> *AB* I, xvi. Hamburg-Bremen's role in the conversion of the north is evident in a number of papal letters from the ninth century: *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, Svenskt diplomatariums huvudkartotek över medeltidsbrev, (*SDHK*), Vol. 1, J.G. Liljegren (ed.), (Stockholm, 1829-1834). Sergius II in 846 (*SDHK* 148), Leo IV in 849 (*SDHK* 149) and Nicholas I in 865 (*SDHK* 151). For a less traditional view of the foundation of Hamburg and Bremen see Eric Knibbs, *Ansgar, Rimbert and the Forged Foundations of Hamburg-Bremen* (Farnham, 2011).

<sup>22</sup> *AB*, prologue. According to Tschan, Adam tends to 'exaggerate the importance of the see and its Slavic and Scandinavian missions,' p. 5, footnote 6.

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<sup>24</sup> *AB*, prologue. According to Tschan, Adam tends to 'exaggerate the importance of the see and its Slavic and Scandinavian missions,' p. 5, footnote 6.



civil conflict, the Saxon rebellion.<sup>24</sup> Adam implies that Hamburg-Bremen could no longer fulfil its special prerogative of spreading Christianity to the people of the north. He claims that the north would long since have been converted were it not for the bad priests—clearly a concern of Hamburg-Bremen as the see responsible for the entire north.<sup>25</sup> From Adam’s depiction of Adalbert’s career we find that Adalbert was a powerful and influential man in the German Empire, an image confirmed by later historians.<sup>26</sup> He spent much time away from his bishopric, often staying with the court which moved from place to place.<sup>27</sup> His prominence was such that on one occasion the German emperor Henry IV proposed to make him pope.<sup>28</sup> Although Adam at times appears in awe of Adalbert’s secular success, and occasionally makes positive remarks about him, his fundamental view of Adalbert’s success and strife for secular glory is negative.<sup>29</sup> His negative view is also evident in his dedication of his work to Liemar, the succeeding archbishop, where he urges change—clearly indicating he is not content with former archbishop Adalbert’s reign.<sup>30</sup>

In his dedication, Adam states that his objective is to ‘help a mother spent of strength,’ a reference to the bishopric, as he noted that ‘the ancient and honourable prerogatives’ of the church had been ‘gravely diminished.’<sup>31</sup> He is referring to the weak state of Hamburg-Bremen. Historians have taken his statement to refer to the loss of status of Hamburg-Bremen—the see that Rome had chosen to have authority of the northern region—as in this period Hamburg-Bremen’s authority over the north was threatened by the emerging claims of independence from the Danish church and from the newly

<sup>24</sup> On the Saxon wars see Ian S. Robinson, *Henry IV of Germany 1156-1106* (Cambridge, 1999) 63-104.

Primary source: Bruno (Brunonis), *De Bello Saxonico*, W. Wattenbach (ed.), MGH Srg 15 (Hannover, 1880).

<sup>25</sup> On bad priests and conversion, *AB* IV, xxi.

<sup>26</sup> On Adalbert: Mary Stroll, *Popes and Antipopes: The Politics of Eleventh Century Church Reform* (Leiden, 2012) 205; Günter Glaeske, *Die Erzbischöfe von Hamburg-Bremen als Reichsfürsten (937-1258)* (Hildesheim, 1962) 55-97; E. N. Johnson, ‘Adalbert of Hamburg-Bremen: A Politician of the Eleventh Century,’ *Speculum* 9, no. 2 (1934) 147-179.

<sup>27</sup> Main places the court stayed at were Aachen, Goseck, Minden, Mainz, Goslar, Cologne, Regensburg, Erlangen, Kaiserworth, Lorsch, Worms and Quedlingburg. Otto Heinrich May (ed.), *Regesten der Erzbischöfe von Bremen*, Vol. 1 (787–1306) (Hannover, 1937).

<sup>28</sup> *AB* III, vii. Adalbert was a contender when Henry deposed three simultaneous popes and put a German, Suidiger of Bamberg, on the papal throne as Clemens II. May (ed.), *Regesten der Erzbischöfe von Bremen*, 55; Stroll, *Popes and Antipopes*, 24f.

<sup>29</sup> Adam’s adulation of Adalbert’s high office: *AB* III, v, xxxi.

<sup>30</sup> Liemar, see Glaeske, *Die Erzbischöfe von Hamburg-Bremen als Reichsfürsten (937-1258)* 98f.

<sup>31</sup> ‘*Mox igitur ut oculis atque auribus accepi, ecclesiam vestram antiqui honoris privilegio nimis extenuatam, multis egere constructorum manibus, cogitabam diu, quo laboris nostri monimento exhaustam viribus matrem potuerim iuvare.*’ *AB*, prologue. p. 3.

established churches of the other Nordic countries.<sup>32</sup> My thesis suggests that when Adam wishes to ‘help a mother spent of strength’ he is not referring to Hamburg-Bremen’s potential loss of authority but to its impoverished and disabled state under the leadership of Adalbert.<sup>33</sup> Adam was concerned that the new bishop would copy Adalbert’s mistakes and neglect the diocese. In the very last lines of the prologue, Adam addresses Liemar directly, urging him to make right what is wrong and ‘keep it righted forever.’<sup>34</sup> Thus for a didactic purpose Adam presents previous archbishops’ lives as examples so that Liemar and succeeding archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen would have positive models to emulate, as well as learning what to avoid from the negative model, Adalbert. The Hamburg-Bremen bishops are Adam’s immediate audience; it is for them he writes. St Bernard’s definition of Saints’ *Lives* is applicable to Adam’s narrative: ‘It was always considered praiseworthy to record the illustrious lives of the saints as it was so that they could serve as a mirror and good example.’<sup>35</sup> Bede’s explanation of his purpose in writing is equally applicable to Adam’s narrative. Adam is familiar with Bede and, like Bede, holds up positive and negative models of behaviour for his readers to learn from. Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* which does the same, very clearly explains the purpose of this:

should history tell of good men and their good estate, the thoughtful listener is spurred on to imitate the good; should it record the evil ends of wicked men, no less effectually the devout and earnest listeners or reader is kindled to eschew what is harmful and perverse, and himself with greater care pursue those things which he has learned to be good and pleasing in the sight of God.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Goetz, ‘Constructing the Past,’ 17-51:20; Nyberg, ‘Stad, skrift och stift, 295-339:302. See also Michael Gelting, ‘Elusive Bishops: Remembering, Forgetting, and Remaking the History of the Early Danish Church,’ in Sean Gilsdorf (ed.), *The Bishop: Power and Piety at the First Millennium* (Münster, 2004) 169-200.

<sup>33</sup> The foundation of Nidaros (Trondheim), the first outside the Danish sphere, took place in 1152; Uppsala in 1164. According to Hallencreutz the popes from Gregory VII and onwards encouraged Scandinavian kings to independent church formation, outside the sphere of Hamburg-Bremen; thus the function of the new founded bishoprics was to strengthen papal power. Carl F. Hallencreutz, ‘Riksidentitet, stiftsidentitet och den vidare Europagemenskapen,’ in Bertil Nilson (ed.), *Kristnandet i Sverige: gamla källor och nya perspektiv* (Uppsala, 1996) 243-268:262, 268.

<sup>34</sup> AB, prologue; ‘*corrigi et correctae perpetue conservari*,’ *Adam Bremensis*, prologue. According to Garipzanov it was Adam’s view that Liemar should fulfil what Adalbert had failed to do: Ildar H. Garipzanov, ‘Christianity and Paganism in Adam of Bremen’s Narrative,’ in Ildar H. Garipzanov (ed.), *Historical Narratives and Christian Identity on a European Periphery: Early History Writing in Northern, East-Central, and Eastern Europe (c. 1070-1200)* (Turnhout, 2011) 13-29:22.

<sup>35</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.) prologue.

<sup>36</sup> Bede, *HE*, preface.

## Hamburg-Bremen in the Broader Context of Papal Primacy and Empire

Adam was writing his church history at a time when the power struggle between the German Empire and the papacy erupted into the Investiture Controversy.<sup>37</sup> The context is vital for understanding Adam's negative depiction of Adalbert, Adam's promotion of reformist values, and the tension and ambiguity that mark his narrative. Adam did not take sides because he thought pastors should not involve themselves in secular affairs. Missions and pastoral care were more relevant issues for a cleric as we will see in the section on Adam's ideals. Adam remains uneasily neutral, whilst being careful to point out that Adalbert was loyal to both parties.<sup>38</sup> For Adam a break with Rome is unthinkable, as Rome is the head of the Christian church.

The Investiture Controversy started when, after several centuries of weak and chaotic leadership, the papacy began a reform programme and asserted its power.<sup>39</sup> Pope Gregory VII (r. 1073-1085) who promoted reform and clashed with the German emperor, talked about *corrigere et emendare*.<sup>40</sup> Both words have a similar meaning: to put straight, or to amend. Adam uses the word *corrigo* in relation to Pope Leo IX (r.1049-1054), a pope with reformist ideals, when he came to Germany 'for bettering the needs of the church.'<sup>41</sup> Significantly Adam also uses the word *corrige* in his prologue when he is urging Liemar to '*corrige et correcta perpetue conservari* (make right what is wrong among us and keep it righted forever.) Thus Adam appears supportive of the ideals of the Gregorian reform. Issues like priestly marriage and simony, the buying of church offices, were at the forefront of the reform movement, as was the question of who had the right to appoint bishops: secular authorities or the

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<sup>37</sup> Leidulf Melve, *Inventing the Public Sphere: The Public Debate during the Investiture Contest* (c. 1030-1122), 2 Vols. (Leiden, 2007); Mary Stroll, *Symbols as Power: The Papacy Following the Investiture Contest* (Leiden, 1991); Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia, 1988); I.S. Robinson, *Authority and Resistance in the Investiture Contest* (Manchester, 1978).

<sup>38</sup> AB III, Lxxviii.

<sup>39</sup> Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1993); Robinson, *The Papacy 1073-1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1990).

<sup>40</sup> Julia Barrow, 'Ideas and Application of Reform,' in Thomas F. X. Noble and Julia M. H. Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, Vol. 3, *Early Medieval Christianities c.600-c.1100* (Cambridge, 2008) 345-362 (notes 725-730): 356. Gregory uses the word reform (*reformatio/reformare*) only 4 times in 350 letters. Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century*, 160. For alternative terms used by reformers, see Giles Constable, 'Renewal and Reform in Religious Life,' in Robert L. Benson, Giles Constable, Carol Lanham (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982) 37-67:39.

<sup>41</sup> AB III, xxix; 'papa Leo pro corrigendis ecclesiae,' Adam Bremensis, III, xxix.

church.<sup>42</sup> The concerns of the reform movement were embraced by the church in Germany. Adam shows that Adalbert was in favour of reform when he speaks of a reform synod which Adalbert attended in Mainz 1049, during which simony and clerical marriage were condemned, two of the main issues of the reformists. On his return from the synod, Adalbert supported the reform. Adam comments: 'That our lord archbishop, when he came home, did not keep silent about these evils is proved.'<sup>43</sup> This is one case where Adam is positive about Adalbert. Reform of the church is an issue that Adam feels strongly about; here he shows that Adalbert also embraced the papal reform. It is not Adalbert's views that Adam is critical of, but his failure to promote his views by living an exemplary life.

It is important to note that the general issue of reform was never in question by the German kings in spite of their opposition to a strong papacy, although there was some opposition to individual reform issues.<sup>44</sup> In 1075 Pope Gregory VII issued the *Dictatus papae* outlining his concept of papal power.<sup>45</sup> It states that papal power is unlimited; certain clauses remove power from the secular authorities to the ecclesiastical.<sup>46</sup> The implications are that the pope becomes a power above the emperor; indeed, he is the maker of the emperors. The papal legates sent to Germany by Gregory were seen as aggressive in their zeal, which divided the German bishops into rival groups, one loyal to the emperor and one to the reformist papacy.<sup>47</sup> Whilst Adam mentions Adalbert showing 'complaisant zeal' towards the papal legates, he avoids referring to the fact that papal legates deposed bishops loyal to the German emperor Henry IV.<sup>48</sup> Adam is guarded in his depiction of current events that involve the Investiture Controversy and he is conspicuously silent on Adalbert's successor Liemar's (r. 1072-1102) role in the conflict. Liemar manifestly sided with the German emperor in his clash with the pope.

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<sup>42</sup> Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century*, 161-184. The ideas of reform: Gerhart B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform, Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (Harvard, 1959).

<sup>43</sup> AB III, xxx.

<sup>44</sup> Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century*, 163.

<sup>45</sup> Gregory VII, *Dictatus Papae*, E. Caspar (ed.) MGH Epistolae Selectae 2 (Berlin 1920-23) Part I, II, 55a, p. 202f.

<sup>46</sup> Klaus Schatz, *Papal Primacy from Origins to Present* (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1990) 85f.

<sup>47</sup> Robinson, *The Papacy*, 151-152.

<sup>48</sup> AB III, Lxxviii.

As Tschan (and Schmeidler before him) argues, Adam wrote with haste during the most intense period of the Investiture Controversy.<sup>49</sup> Janson argues that Adam's work was produced under pressure, during an even shorter timespan: the winter of 1075-76.<sup>50</sup> His narrative ends in 1072, with the death of Adalbert, but he continued writing until 1076. He, and others, continued adding scholia until 1081-1085, but the events of the Investiture Controversy were not mentioned. This present thesis agrees that the work is hastily produced. It is evident in his inaccuracy regarding sources and facts, and the lack of organisation of the material, especially in the first two chapters. However, if writing in haste sharpens one's mind to address what is important we must accept that Adam's focus is on models of good pastoral care, as well as providing us with examples of the opposite; how not to behave as a bishop. What he did not want to focus on was calamities like the excommunication of his own archbishop.

Liemar was suspended from his duties by the pope in December 1074 and later excommunicated.<sup>51</sup> Liemar played an active role in the Investiture Controversy and in one instance referred to the pope as that 'dangerous man' (*periculosus homo*).<sup>52</sup> In 1076, the German king Henry IV declared that Gregory was no longer entitled to be pope, and was in turn excommunicated by Gregory. None of these controversial events are described in Adam's narrative. Whilst Adam is open about Adalbert and his dealing with the king and pope, Adam is almost silent regarding Liemar. Apart from the dedication, there is an epilogue poem praising Liemar.<sup>53</sup> Here Adam acclaims his good qualities and his involvement in the brokering of peace during the Saxon civil war.<sup>54</sup> Yet, while Adam was writing his narrative, Liemar played an important part in supporting the stand of Henry IV, information that Adam completely suppresses.<sup>55</sup> This leads to the supposition that Adam was silent because he disagreed with Liemar's open stand against the pope. As evident from the positive tone in the prologue and epilogue poem which praises Liemar, Adam thought highly of him at that time, or,

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<sup>49</sup> AB, intro. xxix.

<sup>50</sup> Henrik Janson, 'Adam av Bremen, Gregorius VII and Uppsalatemplet,' in Anders Hultgård (ed.), *Uppsala och Adam av Bremen* (Falun, 1997) 131-195:134.

<sup>51</sup> Janson, 'Adam av Bremen, Gregorius VII and Uppsalatemplet,' 131-195:135.

<sup>52</sup> *Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV*, C. Erdmann, N Fickermann (ed.) [Die deutschen Geschichtsquellen des Mittelalters 500-1500. Die Briefe des deutschen Kaiserzeit (MGH) 5] (Weimar, 1950), Hildesheimer briefe, 15, p. 34; Latin original and Swedish translation by Janson in Janson, *Templum Nobilissimum*, 88.

<sup>53</sup> AB, epilogue, 224-227.

<sup>54</sup> 'tu pacem terris antiqua lite fugatam, ecclesiis revocas; iam tercia prelia surgunt.' Adam Bremensis, epilogue.

<sup>55</sup> According to Janson, *Templum Nobilissimum*, 49, German research considers that Liemar's role in the break between papacy and the imperial power has hereto been undervalued.

alternatively, felt under pressure to write in praise of his bishop, hoping that his rule would instigate a change for the better. He urged Liemar to work on the issues that are important; the missions to the north. His excommunication by a pope is nothing that Adam wants to publicise. Adam's agenda is not that of court or papal politics but of pastoral care and the wider object of the Christianisation of the entire world.

### **Adam's Model of a Good Pastor: A Response to Gregory the Great and Bede**

Like others in the age of reform, Adam looked back to an earlier and idealised period for inspiration: the early church of the apostolic period.<sup>56</sup> These Apostolic reform ideals were expressed by Pope Gregory the Great.<sup>57</sup> His writing was of great importance to the reform movement and his namesake Gregory VII turned to his letters for guidance on how to govern the church.<sup>58</sup> Adam too is inspired by the writings of St Gregory for his representation of the ideal bishop. Gregory sent a mission to England at the end of the sixth century, as described by Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History*.<sup>59</sup> Adam had read Bede, whose narrative of the conversion of the English includes copies of letters from Gregory to the missionaries, which contained advice to bishops. Adam's ideal of Christian life was influenced by these letters of advice regarding leadership, conversion and pastoral care—and by similar ideas in Gregory's and Bede's works. These bishops are carefully fulfilling their duties whilst still not neglecting their spiritual lives. They are people who are uninterested in money and possessions, an uninterest in material things that we will also see in Adam's description of the peoples of Sweden and Norway.

All the bishops of Hamburg-Bremen that Adam holds up as positive examples follow this model, but most specifically Ansgar and Rimbert, who together went on a mission

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<sup>56</sup> On the primitive church as a model for reform: Giles Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996) 159; Glenn Olsen, "The Idea of the 'Ecclesia Primitiva' in the Writings of the Twelfth-Century Canonists," *Traditio* 25 (1969) 61-86; Bellitto, *Renewing Christianity: A History of Christian Reform from Day One to Vatican II* (New York and Mahwah, NY., 2001), 49; Dooyne Dawson, *Cities of the Gods: Communist Utopias in Greek Thought* (Oxford, 1992) 258-263.

<sup>57</sup> John Moorhead, *Gregory the Great* (London, 2005).

<sup>58</sup> Constant J. Mews and Claire Renkin, 'The Legacy of Gregory the Great in the Latin West,' in Bronwen Neil and Matthew Dal Santo (eds.), *A Companion to Gregory the Great* (Leiden, 2013) 315-342:333.

<sup>59</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.23 describes the start of the mission; Henry Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1972, reprint 1991); J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People: A Historical Commentary* (Oxford, 1988).

to Sweden c. 832.<sup>60</sup> Ansgar, as Adam tells us, was ‘outwardly an apostle but inwardly a monk.’<sup>61</sup> The same applies to Rimbart who was exceptionally active in the care of the diocese and on his missions; as his successor Adalgar reports, he ‘lost nothing of his monastic perfection by reason of his pastoral cares.’<sup>62</sup> These descriptions recall Bede’s praise of Gregory the Great. Bede presents Gregory himself as a model pastor and monk, and tells us that the saint:

lost none of his monastic perfection by reason of his pastoral cares...while fulfilling his pontifical duties, he turned his own house into a monastery...he never ceased from his heavenly manner of life, though he had to live in an earthly palace...through their [the monks] unremitting example he could bind himself, as if were by an anchor cable, to the calm shores of prayer, while he was being tossed about on the ceaseless tide of secular affairs... so his mind, shaken by worldly business, could be strengthened by the encouragement he derived from daily reading and contemplation in their company.<sup>63</sup>

Rimbart, as Adam tells us, was influenced by St Gregory. Rimbart copied a selection of the sayings of St Gregory ‘with his own hand,’ and these words he ministered ‘to all without ceasing.’<sup>64</sup> Whilst Adam does not identify which works by St Gregory Rimbart copied from, the ideals to which a bishop should aspire are found in Gregory’s *Homilies on Ezekiel* and the *Morals on the Book of Job*, but culminate in *The Pastoral Care* where the ideas from the other works are brought together and greatly expanded.<sup>65</sup> Adam is familiar with, and cites from these works. *The Pastoral Care*, which was immensely popular in the Middle Ages, gives detailed advice to bishops on how to lead their flock.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> On Ansgar: *Vita Anskarii* by Rimbart, G. Waitz (ed.), MGH SSrG (Hanover, 1884); *Anskar, The Apostle of the North, 801-865, translated from the Vita Anskarii by Bishop Rimbart his Fellow Missionary and Successor*, Charles H. Robinson (tr.) (London, 1921). Swedish translation and commentary: *Boken om Ansgar*, Eva Odelman (tr.), commentary by Anders Ekenberg, Carl Frederick Hallencreutz, Sven Helander, Alf Härdelin, Eva Odelman (Stockholm, 1986).

<sup>61</sup> *AB* I, xxxiii.

<sup>62</sup> *AB* I, xLv. Rimbart succeeded Ansgar in 865, Ansgar’s death is recorded in *AB*, I, xLiv.

<sup>63</sup> Bede, *HE*. 2.1.

<sup>64</sup> *AB* I, xLiv.

<sup>65</sup> *St Gregory the Great: Morals on the Book of Job by St Gregory the Great*, John Henry Parker, J.F. G. and J. Rivington (ed. and tr.) 3 Vols. (Oxford, 1844-50); *The Homilies of Saint Gregory the Great on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, T. Gray (tr.) (Etna, CA., 1990).

<sup>66</sup> *The Pastoral Care* was highly regarded in the Carolingian empire; at the time of Charlemagne its study was especially encouraged at a number of councils. Gregory the Great, *The Pastoral Care*, H. Davis (tr.) (Westminster, MD, 1950) prologue. For the influence on Gregory VII’s reform and later writers see: Mews and Renkin, ‘The Legacy of Gregory the Great in the Latin West,’ 315-342.

According to Gregory, a bishop ‘ought by all means to be drawn with cords to be an example of good living who already lives spiritually.’<sup>67</sup> ‘Every preacher should give forth a sound more by his deeds than by his words.’<sup>68</sup> Gregory’s ideas of the ideal bishop followed the precepts of the Bible. How a bishop is to act is laid down in writings concerning the establishment of the church in the apostolic age: Acts and the Epistles, especially Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus.<sup>69</sup> The epistles contain advice to the very early Christian congregations. In scriptural accounts of this early church the bishops lived in close affinity to their congregations. After Pentecost, the Christian congregation lived together and its members had no individual possessions. They sold what they had and gave to the community who shared the resources according to individual needs (Acts 2:44-46, 4:32-35). They were contented: ‘they did eat their meat with gladness and a singleness of heart’ (Acts 2:46). Adam admires the teachings of this era as evident from his depiction of Ansgar and Rimbert, who live similar lifestyles. It is also evident in his admiration of the similarly unmaterialistic and contented lifestyle of the Swedes and Norwegians.

Bede also held up the community of the early church as an ideal. For him, this ideal was embodied by the Gregorian mission to England under the leadership of Augustine.<sup>70</sup> These ideals were also embodied by Aidan, from Iona, whose mission to Northumbria followed Augustine’s mission to southern England.<sup>71</sup> Both are depicted as having similar Christian values. As quoted in the *Ecclesiastical History*, Gregory writes to Augustine: ‘you ought to institute that manner of life which our fathers followed in the earliest beginnings of the Church: none of them said anything he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.’<sup>72</sup> Bede tells us that as soon as Gregory’s missionaries had settled, they ‘began to imitate the way of life of the apostles and of the primitive church...they despised all worldly things as foreign to them, they accepted only the necessities of life from whom they taught; in all things

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<sup>67</sup> Gregory the Great, *The Pastoral Care*, H. Davis (tr.), 1.10.

<sup>68</sup> Gregory the Great, *The Pastoral Care*, H. Davis (tr.), 3.40.

<sup>69</sup> The ideal bishop in Titus 1:7-11, and Timothy 3:2-6. Adam cites Titus 3:9 (about avoiding foolish strife) in *AB* III, Lvi.

<sup>70</sup> On the Gregorian mission, Henry Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1972, reprint 1991) 51-68.

<sup>71</sup> On the Irish missionaries: Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England*, 94-102.

<sup>72</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.27; Olsen, ‘The Idea of the ‘Ecclesia Primitiva,’ 61-86:68-69.



they practised what they preached.’<sup>73</sup> Bede gave proof that when one lives an exemplary life, it will inspire others to convert to Christianity. He tells us that some, ‘marvelling at their simple and innocent way of life and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine, believed and were baptized.’<sup>74</sup> In the north of the country, Aidan’s mission worked on the same principle of good example and imitation of the primitive church:

Aidan taught the clergy many lessons about the conduct of their lives but above all he left them a most salutary example of abstinence and self-control: and the best recommendation of his teaching to all was that he taught them no other way of life than that which he practised among his fellows. For he neither sought after nor cared for worldly possessions but he rejoiced to hand over at once, to any poor man he met, the gifts which he had received from kings or rich men of the world.<sup>75</sup>

Aidan’s life, Bede tells us, ‘was in great contrast to our modern slothfulness.’<sup>76</sup> All who were with him ‘had to engage in some form of study...reading of the scriptures or learning the psalms.’<sup>77</sup> As we saw from Adam’s depiction of Ansgar and Rimbart, Adam also idealises a life balanced by diligence in outward pastoral duties and inward contemplation. In Bede’s depiction of Aidan we find both. Not only did Aidan show devotion to his studies but he also lived an exemplary active life:

used to travel everywhere, in town and country, not on horseback but on foot, unless compelled by urgent necessity to do otherwise, in order that, as he walked along, whenever he saw people whether rich or poor, he might at once approach them and, if they were unbelievers, invite them into accepting the mystery of the faith; or, if they were believers, that he might strengthen them in the faith, urging them by word and deed to practise almsgiving and good works.<sup>78</sup>

For Bede and Gregory, as for Adam, the bishops who are examples for their flocks were spiritual and unworldly, yet not neglecting the practical needs of the diocese; active in missionary work and tending to the needs of the poor, yet retaining the

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<sup>73</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.26. For Bede and reform, see Thacker; ‘Bede’s Ideal of Reform,’ 130-153; Scott DeGregorio, ‘Bede and Benedict of Nursia,’ in Stephen Baxter, Catherine E. Karkov, Janet L. Nelson and David Pelteret, (eds.) *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald* (Farnham, 2009) 149-163; Scott DeGregorio, ‘Bede’s ‘In Ezran et Neemiam’ and the Reform of the Northumbrian Church,’ *Speculum* 79, no.1 (2004) 1-25; D.P. Kirby, ‘Eddius Stephanus and the Life of Wilfrid,’ *The English Historical Review* 98, no. 386 (1983) 101-114.

<sup>74</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.26.

<sup>75</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.5.

<sup>76</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.5.

<sup>77</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.5.

<sup>78</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.5.

characteristics of a monk. The bishop is a watchman, Gregory tells us, ‘And whoever is placed as watchman of a people must stand on a height through life so that he can benefit from foresight....the more subtly he sees the life of his inferiors, the more he will refrain from setting his spirit on earthly things, which he despises.’<sup>79</sup> Bede describes Gregory’s own character as devoid of material thoughts: ‘Other popes devoted themselves to the task of building churches and adorning them with gold and silver, but he devoted himself entirely to winning souls. Whatever money he had, he took diligent care to distribute it and give to the poor.’<sup>80</sup>

Adam’s account of the earlier centuries of the church of Hamburg-Bremen has several similar examples of ideal bishops. We learn that Hoger (909-915) was ‘most scrupulous in the matter of ecclesiastical discipline,’ making frequent rounds of the monasteries of his diocese.<sup>81</sup> Another bishop, Adaldag (937-988), was ‘noble in appearance, nobler yet in the probity of his ways.’<sup>82</sup> It is not his noble appearance that is of importance, but his character: Adaldag’s perfection came from the pious duty he felt towards making Bremen a good place for ordinary people; he set Bremen on the road to prosperity.<sup>83</sup> He was on intimate terms with King Otto (912-973) to the extent ‘that he could scarcely even tear himself away from his side’ yet he ‘never lost sight of the needs of his diocese or neglected the care of his legateship.’<sup>84</sup> Adalward, who was a bishop in Sweden, converted the people through his ‘holy living and his good teaching.’<sup>85</sup>

The ideal bishops are also at times called on to be extraordinarily courageous. Ansgar and Rimbert in particular were not only models of perfection in the care of the diocese, but they also, as Adam tells us, showed personal courage and zealous effort in the conversion of the Danes and Swedes. Ansgar was the first bishop to go to Sweden with the intention to extend Christianity to the north. Rimbert was his companion. It exceeds all belief, Adam tells us, that Ansgar and Rimbert ‘should have gone undaunted through such great perils by sea and land and preached to peoples before whose

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<sup>79</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homilies of St Gregory the Great on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, T. Gray (tr.) .1.11.4.

<sup>80</sup> Bede, *HE*. 2.1.

<sup>81</sup> *AB* I, Li; ‘*fidelis, inquam dispensator et prudens*,’ *Adam Bremensis*,’ I, Li.

<sup>82</sup> *AB* II, i.

<sup>83</sup> *AB* II, ii.

<sup>84</sup> *AB* II, ii.

<sup>85</sup> *AB* IV, xxiii.

onslaughts neither armed kings nor the Frankish tribes could stand.’<sup>86</sup> We can compare Bede’s depiction of the conversion of the English where the mission is similarly portrayed as facing huge perils. Bishop Augustine and a group of monks were so fearful of their task that they pleaded with the pope not to send them to such a fierce barbarous nation. However, although initially daunted, with the encouragement of the pope they went.<sup>87</sup> Yet it was not only their courage in converting the heathens that is held up as an ideal, but also the totality of their lives as bishops: their work in their own diocese. Whenever Ansgar was not out on his missions, he was ‘concerned about his congregation at home,’ providing aid for the poor and unfortunate.<sup>88</sup> Rimbart, like Ansgar, ‘provided with all diligence for the maintenance of the needy, not only in the bishopric but wherever he was.’<sup>89</sup> Adam’s representation of these bishops is in stark contrast to his depiction of Adalbert.

### **Ambivalence and Change of Character in Adam’s Representation of Adalbert**

Adam’s portrayal of Adalbert is ambiguous, ambivalent and even, at times, contradictory. The positive image of Adalbert is found mainly in the first two chapters, after which Adalbert is portrayed in a both negative and positive manner. After this first part of the narrative Adam portrays Adalbert’s character as steadily deteriorating, with the exception of the last six chapters, which represent a reversal or modification of the previous criticism.<sup>90</sup> As a consequence Adalbert’s character is open to interpretation, and a subject of scholarly debate. For example, Reuter refers to Adalbert as ‘Adam’s hero.’<sup>91</sup> Piltz, on the other hand, speaks of Adam’s ambivalent picture of Adalbert.<sup>92</sup> To Bagge, Adam’s portrait of Adalbert ‘manifests considerable psychological insight’ of a character in decline, based on ‘personal and very acute observations.’<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> *AB* I, xLii.

<sup>87</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.23.

<sup>88</sup> *AB* I, xxx.

<sup>89</sup> *AB* I, xLiv.

<sup>90</sup> Bagge, *Deterioration of Character*, ’ 530-548:532, states that Adalbert was essentially bad towards the end but retained some good qualities.

<sup>91</sup> *AB*, intro by Timothy Reuter, xiv.

<sup>92</sup> Piltz, ‘Adam, Biblen och auctores,’ 342-353:345-346.

<sup>93</sup> Bagge, *Deterioration of Character*, ’ 530-548:539.

This variation of scholarly view is possible because of the ambiguity in Adam's work.<sup>94</sup> On occasion Adam will give two different descriptions of an event, leaving it to the reader to decide the more likely version, for example in his depiction of Adalbert's death, discussed later in this chapter. Even when Adam is making seemingly positive remarks about Adalbert, they sometimes contain thinly veiled criticism. Adam's ambiguity or ambivalence relates to his inability to fully criticise Adalbert as he is a bishop of the Roman church and thus head of the missionary endeavour which is of vital importance. Thus Adam often defends his bishop in relation to the northern missions. Barnwell argues that Adam's paradoxical account of Adalbert's pontificate explores the challenges facing the archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen; 'the possibilities for success, and the tragic risks,' without presenting a solution to these challenges.<sup>95</sup> Yet Adam presents a solution: a return to the values of the apostolic church. The negative side of Adalbert has a function; it serves as an example of bad pastoral care: a contrast to Adam's ideals.

Sallust's view of history—of representing political crisis as a moral crisis—as well as his depiction of very complex characters have clearly had an impact on Adam's narrative and his depiction of Adalbert.<sup>96</sup> Sallust's works were widely used in the Middle Ages as a moral guide and inspiration.<sup>97</sup> Sallust described what he saw as Rome's moral decline, blaming the hunger for power and corruption of the Roman nobility. Adam similarly blames his archbishop for the corruption and moral decline of Bremen.<sup>98</sup> Scholars have argued that Adam may have used Sallust's works as an inspiration for a deeper understanding of Adalbert's character. Recently Stok investigated how Adam adapts Sallust to depict what Stok refers to as the psychopathological behaviour of Adalbert.<sup>99</sup> Such claims can only be conjecture, however, it reflects the instability that Adam portrays. Piltz discussed Adam's use of Sallust and briefly remarked that Sallust often depicts contrasting characteristics

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<sup>94</sup> See Barnwell, 'Missionaries and Changing Views of the Other from the Ninth to the Eleventh Centuries,' 116f.

<sup>95</sup> Barnwell, 'Missionaries and Changing Views of the Other from the Ninth to the Eleventh Centuries,' 122.

<sup>96</sup> On Sallust's moralist writing, Beryl Smalley, 'Sallust in the Middle Ages,' in R.R. Bolgar (ed.), *Classical Influences on European Culture A.D. 500-1500* (Cambridge, 1971) 165-175:165. Smalley cites D.C. Earl, *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge, 1961) 44f. See also Garipzanov, 'Christianity and Paganism in Adam of Bremen's Narrative,' 13-29:20.

<sup>97</sup> Smalley, 'Sallust in the Middle Ages,' 165-175; Lars Boje Mortensen, 'The Texts and Contexts of Ancient Roman History in Twelfth Century Scholarship,' in Paul Magdalino (ed.), *Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe* (London, 1992) 99-116:105.

<sup>98</sup> For similarities in the two authors, see Piltz, 'Adam, Bibeln och auctores,' 342-353:345-345-346.

<sup>99</sup> Stok, 'Modelli e Suggestioni sallustiane nella Biografia dell'Arcivescovo Adalberto,' 79-100.

within the same person.<sup>100</sup> Following Piltz, this section suggests that there are common traits between Sallust's characters and Adam's Adalbert: conflicting positive and negative characteristics in the same person.

Sallust's characters Jugurtha and Catiline are portrayed as bad people but with talents and virtues, just like Adalbert in Adam's narrative.<sup>101</sup> In his *War with Jugurtha*, Sallust describes the story of the fall and destruction of a virtuous but flawed character, the African king Jugurtha. *The War with Catiline*, tells the story of Catiline, the charismatic but ultimately immoral and depraved noble scheming against the Roman republic.<sup>102</sup> Jugurtha started out with an abundance of positive qualities but went through a change for the worse in the narrative, because of his ambition, greed, and corruption from bad influences, as did Adam's Adalbert.<sup>103</sup> There is also a likeness between the depictions of bishop Adalbert and the dangerous scheming demagogue Catiline; they both possess dual positive and negative characteristics. Catiline had great vigour of mind and body, could endure hunger and cold, was possessed of eloquence but was also depraved and evil, cunning and treacherous.<sup>104</sup> Adalbert was described as 'keen and well trained of mind, he was skilful in many arts...possessed of great prudence,' but he is also represented as proud, arrogant and almost insane towards the end.<sup>105</sup>

As an example of this polarisation, Adam writes that Adalbert's first duty was to the church, he tells us that 'no one so vigorous' in the application of this duty to the northern missions could ever be found.<sup>106</sup> Yet, in the same paragraph, Adam points out that 'not being well on his guard against any defect in his virtue, the man met with ruin as much through his own negligence as through the driving malice of others,' thus diminishing the earlier praise.<sup>107</sup> Adam is extremely critical of Adalbert's neglect of

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<sup>100</sup> Piltz, 'Adam, Bibeln och auctores,' 342-353:345.

<sup>101</sup> Ann Vasaly, 'Characterization and Complexity: Caesar, Sallust, and Livy,' in Andrew Feldherr (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Historians* (Cambridge, 2009) 245-260:251-255. Ann Thomas Wilkins, *Villain or Hero: Sallust's Portrayal of Catiline* (New York, 1994).

<sup>102</sup> Sallust, *The War with Catiline. The War with Jugurtha*, John T. Ramsey (ed.), J.C. Rolfe (tr.) LCL (1921; revised 1931).

<sup>103</sup> AB III, i. The positive qualities of the young Jugurtha, Sallust, *The War Against Jugurtha*, 6.

<sup>104</sup> Sallust, *Catiline*, 5.1-5. Vasaly, 'Characterization and Complexity: Caesar, Sallust, and Livy,' 245-260:252.

<sup>105</sup> AB III, ii. Arrogance, AB, xLi; pride: AB III, xxxvii; insanity, AB III, Lxii.

<sup>106</sup> AB III, i.

<sup>107</sup> AB III, i.

the mission to the north on account of his constant presence at court, but in one instance he defends the archbishop: he spent so much time at court to work for the welfare of his church, ‘for the purpose of exalting the church,’ and ‘when everything he had was lost or rather squandered he worked to set the bishopric free.’<sup>108</sup> However, as this thesis argues, the negative image of Adalbert prevails, and it is this negative image that is held up as a warning to future bishops.

Even in what appears as praise there is criticism implied. As an example, we are told of Adalbert in tears, lamenting that he would no doubt share the fate of his predecessors that had been ‘boiled and fried over fire in the persecution of the dukes and the malice of the diocesans’ wishing that he, like them, would be ‘crowned with martyrdom.’<sup>109</sup> Both Adam and Adalbert are aware that not a single of the preceding archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen died a martyr’s death, thus Adalbert’s moaning and crying appear theatrical.<sup>110</sup>

Adam’s most spectacular change in the way he writes of Adalbert takes place at the very end of Book III, where the last six chapters alter the image of Adalbert and his endeavours considerably.<sup>111</sup> They mark a total contrast to the previous text which has just described Adalbert’s life as a failure, his actions those of a pagan.<sup>112</sup> Like other parts of the narrative when Adalbert is represented in a positive manner, they refer to the northern mission. They contain a mostly positive summary of Adalbert’s missionary deeds, in which Adalbert appears as vital to the conversion of the north. Adam enumerates the bishops and priests sent as far away as Iceland and Greenland, and he describes Adalbert’s effort in calling northern bishops to a synod.<sup>113</sup> Adam tells us that Adalbert extended the sway of the archbishopric over the far away nations ‘even more magnificently than others had done.’<sup>114</sup> It reads as if Adam is aware that his

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<sup>108</sup> AB III, Lv.

<sup>109</sup> Schol. 87.

<sup>110</sup> Only Adalbert’s friend, John Scot, was martyred, not in Bremen but during the Slav rebellion. AB III, Li.

<sup>111</sup> AB III, Lxxii-Lxxviii. These chapters are only found in the A 1 MS of Adam’s work which cause editors concern as to where to place them. The Tschan’s translation has followed Schmeidler and placed them in the end of Book III whilst the 1984 Swedish edition put these chapters as an introduction to Book IV. MS A1 (Vienna MS) in Kristensen, *Studien zur Adam von Bremen Überlieferung*, 39-40, 208.

<sup>112</sup> Especially in AB III, Lxxii, Lxiv. Lxv.

<sup>113</sup> AB III, Lxxiv. The synod, planned for sometime around 1059-62, never took place as the Danish bishops refused to attend. Paul B. Pixton, *The German Episcopacy and the Implementation of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1216-1245* (Leiden, 1995) 72-73.

<sup>114</sup> AB III, Lxxii.

criticism of the archbishop will damage the reputation of Hamburg-Bremen, and thus he retreats from his former position.

But even in this section of praise, there is a certain amount of veiled criticism of Adalbert. We are told that Adalbert is planning to go on a mission to the north. Adam writes that ‘with his usual ostentation he began to boast about the laborious tour he would have to make,’ comparing himself to previous apostles to the north, Ansgar, Rimbert and Unni (916-936).<sup>115</sup> He was to be ‘the fourth evangelist’ of the north.<sup>116</sup> The words Adam uses suggests that he does not relish Adalbert comparing himself to these heroic bishops. The journey never took place as Adalbert was dissuaded to travel north by Svein, the king of the Danes, who explained that there is really nothing for the archbishop to do except ‘by his generosity and affability to gain the good will and fidelity of those whom he found prepared to teach the Word of God to the heathen.’<sup>117</sup> Adam refers to the Danish king as ‘prudent which seems to indicate that Adam and Svein is of one mind, Adalbert is not suited for a missionary life.’<sup>118</sup>

A perplexing chapter in this positive summary contains a letter, transcribed by Adam, from Adalbert to the bishop of Roskilde (in Denmark). It concerns the synod which the bishop failed to attend. However, the bishop is only mildly rebuked. The larger part of the letter is taken up by what appears as an angry rant about Adalward, a bishop that Adalbert had sent to Sigtuna in Sweden, where he had been rejected as the church already had a bishop. Instead of returning to Bremen, Adalward had taken up the vacant bishop seat in Skara on invitation from its congregation.<sup>119</sup> Adalbert was not pleased as can be seen from his use of words when he writes that Adalward had ‘proceeded to usurp the Church at Skara.’<sup>120</sup> Earlier in the narrative we were told that Adalbert joyfully:

gave the petitioning flock [from Sweden] a willing pastor [Adalward]. When he came into Sweden he was afforded so eager a reception on the part of everyone that he won

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<sup>115</sup> *AB* III, Lxxii. It must be noted that none of these missionary heroes died a martyr’s death. Ansgar and Rimbert came back to Bremen to continue their careers, whilst Unni died of an unspecified illness at Björkö. Unni’s death, *AB* I, Lxii.

<sup>116</sup> *AB* III, Lxxii.

<sup>117</sup> *AB* III, Lxxii.

<sup>118</sup> *AB* III, Lxxii.

<sup>119</sup> *AB* III, Lxxvi, see also Schol. 136.

<sup>120</sup> *AB* III, Lxxvi.

all the people of Wäerland to Christ and is said also to have worked many miracles among the folk.<sup>121</sup>

Adam describes Adalward, whom he may have known personally, as truly a praiseworthy man, who by 'his holy living and by his good teaching he is said to have drawn a great multitude of heathen to the Christian faith.'<sup>122</sup> This recalls Bede's depiction of St Augustine's mission to England where the Christians' holy living impressed the heathens to follow their example and convert.<sup>123</sup> Adalward, in other words, is an ideal bishop. Adalbert, however, does not seem to have been satisfied. We are told that Adalbert 'were not well pleased...and for this reason recalled him to Bremen as a violator of the canons.'<sup>124</sup> The reader knows from Adam's narrative that the bishop that Adalbert had consecrated for Skara was, in Adam's view, unworthy. This bishop Acilin, we are told, 'loved carnal ease' and did not bother to make the journey to Sweden: 'in vain did the Goths send a legation, for until his death he stayed with his pleasures at Cologne.'<sup>125</sup> Thus Adam transcribes a letter which draws our attention to Adalbert's bad judgment in choosing Acilin, a man without the necessary qualities, as bishop to the north. The ambivalence and covert criticism can be explained by the importance Adam placed on Adalbert's position as archbishop. It was of paramount importance to Adam that Adalbert was seen as ecclesiastically correct and unassailable as the head of a missionary endeavour, which was the very reason for the foundation of the Hamburg-Bremen bishopric. Thus Adam is not consistently negative, but even when praising his bishop's involvement in the northern missions his praise is mixed with criticism.

### **Adam's Adalbert: Superficial Secular Glory and Internal Paganism**

In Adam's portrayal, Adalbert comes across as a complex character, good and bad, as we have noted, and in many ways contradictory. It should be noted that Adam is not the only writer of his age to have this contradictory view of the archbishop. The

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<sup>121</sup> *AB* III, xvi.

<sup>122</sup> *AB* IV, xxiii.

<sup>123</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.26.

<sup>124</sup> Schol. 136.

<sup>125</sup> *AB* IV, xxiii.



chronicler Lambert of Hersfeld, Adam's contemporary, describes Adalbert as haughtily arrogant, and a selfish man, responsible for much injustice and abuse, but also devout and chaste. His reckless behaviour was, according to Lambert, disastrous for monasteries, which were taken over by him and his friend count Werner, and given to their friends or to various bishops.<sup>126</sup> It is this image of the reckless and arrogant bishop striving only for personal glory that is held up as a negative model of a bishop. Both the model and the antithesis are clearly influenced by Gregory's and Bede's ideals.

Whilst Adam wrote of Adalbert's outwardly successful career at court as the advisor of kings, there is another dimension to this life-story that Adam claims he wished he did not have to tell:

Alas, that I might write better things about so famous a man who loved even me and was so illustrious in his life. But I am afraid because it is written, 'Woe to you that call evil good;' also 'let them perish 'that put darkness for light' (Isaiah 5:20). It seems to me hazardous for us to have to flatter either in writing or in speech a man who was undone by adulation while he lived.<sup>127</sup>

Adam makes it clear that this could have been different. Adalbert need not have spent a life chasing worldly glory and power at the court at the cost of the diocese had he instead been content with what he had been born with and 'either never seen or rarely visited the unhappy court.'<sup>128</sup> In contrast to Gregory's monastic lifestyle that Adam admires in Ansgar and Rimbert, Adalbert gathered a group of 'disreputable persons and hypocrites' around him.<sup>129</sup> Adalbert, as Adam depicts him, suffered from excessive false pride and he thrived on flattery. He liked adoration and those who did not flatter did not get the opportunity to meet with the man but were 'shut out of doors as if he were witless or stupid.'<sup>130</sup> Adam mocks his use of the title Patriarch to which he had no right.<sup>131</sup> He scorns the people that Adalbert surrounded himself with:

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<sup>126</sup> Lambert von Hersfeld, *Lamperti Annales*, Oswald Holder-Egger (tr.), MGH SSrG 38 (Hannover, 1894); Lampert von Hersfeld, *Annalen*, Adolf Schmidt and Fritz Wolfgang (tr.), *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters* 13 (Darmstadt, 2000), year 1063.

<sup>127</sup> AB III, Lxv.

<sup>128</sup> AB III, Lv.

<sup>129</sup> AB III, xxxvi.

<sup>130</sup> AB III, xxxviii.

<sup>131</sup> AB III, xxxix.

He took into his confidence men of various kinds and of many arts, but chiefly flatterers. He drew their burdensome throng along with him to court and through the diocese or wherever else he journeyed, protesting that he was not only not put to inconvenience by the great multitude of traveling companions but found it diverting.<sup>132</sup>

Adam has nothing but contempt for Adalbert's companions with the exception of three bishops. He describes Dangward of Brandenburg as wise, John the Scot as 'a simple and God-fearing man,' whereas Bovo's worth lies in that he had been on pilgrimage to Jerusalem three times.<sup>133</sup> The rest of Adalbert's personal court is described as a cesspool where liars were so frequent that 'they who spoke the truth would not be believed even under oath.'<sup>134</sup> Here Adam draws the reader directly to Sallust, who describes how disreputable peoples 'all flowed into Rome as into a cesspool.'<sup>135</sup> Sallust speaks of the shameless, the impudent, and those 'whom disgrace or crime had forced to leave home.'<sup>136</sup> This is then the prevailing atmosphere of Adalbert's court. Adam places himself apart from Adalbert's court as well as his values.<sup>137</sup>

Adalbert, we are told, dispersed money to 'disreputable persons and hypocrites, healers and actors and others of that sort.'<sup>138</sup> Indeed he 'slighted alms for the poor and distributed everything he could get among the rich, particularly among sycophants.'<sup>139</sup> Adam tells the reader how Adalbert arrived in Bremen 'puffed up, therefore, by the great honours then accorded him at court' and loaded new taxes on the now 'unmercifully impoverished' population in order to build canonries and strongholds in a city already destitute because of the enormous costs of Adalbert's expeditions and his 'extraordinary activities at a ravenous court.'<sup>140</sup> When Adalbert's career was in ruins and he no longer had money to squander, he stayed in Bremen and 'lived off plundering of the poor and the property of the holy congregations.'<sup>141</sup>

This ruination of Bremen by Adalbert and those that were in his service was an outrage to Adam: 'I dare not say what a sin it is to defraud the poor of their substance, for some

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<sup>132</sup> AB III, xxxvi.

<sup>133</sup> AB III, Lxxvii.

<sup>134</sup> AB III, xxxviii.

<sup>135</sup> Sallust, *Catiline*, 37.5.

<sup>136</sup> Sallust, *Catiline*, 37.5.

<sup>137</sup> AB, prologue.

<sup>138</sup> AB III, xxxvi.

<sup>139</sup> AB III, Lxii.

<sup>140</sup> AB III, xxxvii.

<sup>141</sup> AB III, Lvii.

canons call it sacrilege, others murder.<sup>142</sup> The defrauding of the poor had the consequence that the church could no longer offer assistance. For the last seven years of Adalbert's life, 'absolutely no alms were dispensed from that famous and opulent hospital of the Church of Bremen.'<sup>143</sup> This depiction of corruption is in stark contrast to Adam's accounts of the earlier bishops, Ansgar and Rimbert, who provided for the needy and unfortunate.<sup>144</sup>

Adalbert, according to Adam, committed sacrilege; he even plundered his own churches in order to pay for land.<sup>145</sup> Unlike Adam's ideal bishops, Adalbert's ideal was the bishop of Würzburg who was said 'to have had no rival in his bishopric: since he himself held all the counties of his dioceses, the bishop also possessed ducal authority over the province.'<sup>146</sup> Adalbert was, again according to Adam, jealous of this bishop, and set out to emulate him, with disastrous consequences for the bishopric. In the words of Adam 'our prelate determined to bring under the authority of the Church every count that had any semblance of jurisdiction in his diocese.'<sup>147</sup> He collected gifts from the emperor but he also bought land in order to become the supreme leader in his region. In order to pay for the diocese of Emsgau in Frisia Adalbert plundered his own churches.<sup>148</sup> Adam reacts to this with sorrow and anger:

since he could not easily raise this sum of money, he ordered—alas !—the crosses, the altars, the coronary candelabra, and other ornaments of the church to be taken down.<sup>149</sup>

To Adam, this was sacrilege (*sacrilegium*). He believed everything that happened in his own lifetime to stem from this dreadful destruction of holy objects: 'from that day, therefore, our good fortune changed to ruin, everything turned out adversely for us and the Church.'<sup>150</sup> Adalbert's melting down of church treasures in order to gain territory was a violation of the church; it can be compared to pagan behaviour. Adam described how when Hamburg was razed to the ground by the Slav uprising, 'even the crosses were mutilated by the pagans in derision of our Saviour.'<sup>151</sup> This happened in Adam's

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<sup>142</sup> AB III, Lvii.

<sup>143</sup> AB III, Lvii.

<sup>144</sup> AB I, xxx.

<sup>145</sup> AB III, xLvi.

<sup>146</sup> AB III, xLvi.

<sup>147</sup> AB III, xLvi.

<sup>148</sup> AB III, xLvi.

<sup>149</sup> AB III, xLvi.

<sup>150</sup> AB III, xLvii.

<sup>151</sup> AB III, Li.

own lifetime, in 1066. Adam also speaks of how the Hungarians in the early ninth century were burning churches and butchering priests. They also mutilated and degraded crosses.<sup>152</sup>

The episode of the melting down of the crosses and disposing of church treasure can also be contrasted with the actions of Rimbert. He also sold church vessels but for a godly purpose, to save Christian lives. Having seen the misery of those detained, Rimbert ransomed Christians in Danish captivity, spending all he had, after which he did not hesitate to ‘even sell the vessels of the altar.’<sup>153</sup> Adam is clearly agreeing with Rimbert’s actions when he cites Ambrose: ‘it is better to save souls for God than Gold. Precious therefore are the vessels that redeem souls.’<sup>154</sup> Ambrose himself, as he tells us, broke up sacred vessels in order to pay ransom for captives.<sup>155</sup> For Ambrose, poverty is a valid reason for selling sacred objects:

Would not the Lord Himself say: Why did you suffer so many needy to die of hunger?  
Surely you had gold? Thou should have given them sustenance.<sup>156</sup>

Adam’s thinking on this matter, as others regarding pastoral care and conversion, may also be influenced by Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History*. Bede writes that Aidan ‘distributed the gifts of money which he received from the rich, either, as we have said, for the use of the poor or for the redemption of those who had been unjustly sold into slavery.’<sup>157</sup> Also, in Bede’s account of the Gregorian mission, we find a discussion on how to punish crimes against the church, such as stealing its sacred vessels. In a letter quoted by Bede, Gregory tells Augustine that punishment should be judged by circumstances; those who transgress through lack of means must be dealt with more leniently, whilst those who commit theft although they have resources should be corrected, for their own sake so they do not end up in hell.<sup>158</sup> In this context, Adalbert’s

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<sup>152</sup> *AB I*, Liii.

<sup>153</sup> *AB I*, xxxix. A specific example of Rimbert’s ransoming captives in *AB I*, xLi.

<sup>154</sup> *AB I*, xxxix; Ambrose, *De Officiis ministrorum* (On the Duties of Clergy), H. de Romestin, E. de Romestin and H.T.F. Duckworth (tr.) NPNF Vol. X (1896) II.28.137.

<sup>155</sup> Ambrose, *De Officiis ministrorum*, II, 28.136.

<sup>156</sup> Ambrose, *De Officiis ministrorum*, II, 28.137.

<sup>157</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.5.

<sup>158</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.27 (Gregory’s reply in response to Augustine’s third question, how to punish someone who has robbed a church.)

crime is heinous indeed; he sold sacred church vessels to buy land to add to his own glory, not to feed the hungry or redeem captives.

Adalbert followed his path of earthly ambition and at the end of his life Adam depicts him as involved in magical arts, rituals that recalls those that Adam applies to polytheists.<sup>159</sup> When Adalbert went to bed he was entertained with fables, and when awakened with the interpretation of dreams.<sup>160</sup> Adam calls Adalbert's companion Notebald 'a magician, a flatterer and a most brazen liar.'<sup>161</sup> It had been reported that Adalbert sank 'so low in repute that he was said to have given himself up to the magic arts,' Adam tells us but then informs us that this is untrue.<sup>162</sup> Yet, again Adam qualifies this statement when he adds that Adalbert 'lapsed from the accepted state of rectitude and then broke down altogether.'<sup>163</sup> Adam speaks of the 'violence of his disordered ways,' which suggests a lack of decency or morality.<sup>164</sup> To Adam, it is the polytheists who believe in magicians, not Christians. In Adam's narrative they are magicians and soothsayers and augurs, and especially Norway was seen as being infested with such people.<sup>165</sup> Courland (Latvia) was also full of soothsayers, diviners, and 'necromancers who are even arrayed in a monastic habit.'<sup>166</sup> But to meet with this behaviour in Christian Bremen is truly shocking and unacceptable behaviour from an archbishop. There is another way, Adam explains:

Indeed, one reads about other great men who, despising the glory of the world, fled the royal court as if it were another kind of idolatry, doubtless judging that they had to turn from the turmoil of the world and the tumult of the palace to the contemplative leisure of the solitary life as to a haven of blessed refuge.<sup>167</sup>

When Adam speaks of fleeing from court 'as if from idolatry,' he is not referring to the literal worshipping of idols, but, as he says, to 'another kind' of idolatry.<sup>168</sup> This other kind is described by St Paul when he equates covetousness with idolatry in

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<sup>159</sup> *AB* III, Lxiii.

<sup>160</sup> *AB* III, xxxix.

<sup>161</sup> Schol. 88.

<sup>162</sup> *AB* III, Lxiii.

<sup>163</sup> *AB* III, Lxiii.

<sup>164</sup> *AB* III, Lxiii.

<sup>165</sup> *AB* II, xL.

<sup>166</sup> *AB* IV, xvi.

<sup>167</sup> *AB* III, Lv.

<sup>168</sup> Adam describes the town of Rethra as a seat of idolatry, *AB* II, xxi.

Colossians (Colossians 3:5). Paul reinforces this equation when he claims that ‘no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God’ (Ephesians 5:5). Adalbert’s life at court was a wasted life, as Adam saw it.

Adam does not cite Bede but they are both part of Christian tradition which link materialism with inner paganism; Bede too connects covetousness and idolatry. In his letter to Egbert, Bishop of York, Bede gives advice and directions regarding how to act as a bishop as well as venting his frustration regarding immoral priests and the increasing secularisation of the monasteries. In this letter Bede writes of the sin of covetousness: ‘neither the covetous, nor drunkards, nor extortioners shall possess the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).’<sup>169</sup> Earlier writers have made the same connection between covetousness and idolaters. In the sixth century, the Briton Gildas sees the clergy’s refusal to obey God as the crime of idolatry: ‘since by treading under foot, like swine, the costliest pearls of Christ, they are idolaters.’<sup>170</sup> Gildas here cites from Matthew: ‘Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces’ (Matthew 7:6). Adalbert is thus in a perilous position. He had all the gifts necessary to make a perfect pastor, yet he threw his life away on his pursuit of power and glory.

Adam also implies that Adalbert is apart from Christian community by not including him in imagery related to planting, plantations and vines, words that in scripture, exegesis, and Christian historiography, are often used in relation to the growth of the Christian communities.<sup>171</sup> Bede uses it regarding the Augustinian mission when he tells us that Augustine ‘had a rich harvest,’ by which he means many new converts to the church.<sup>172</sup> Gerald of Wales speaks of Saint Patrick as the first to ‘preach and plant’ the Christian faith in Ireland.<sup>173</sup> Ansgar, in Adam’s narrative, was ‘toiling for the new plantation at Hamburg.’<sup>174</sup> Willehad was ‘dispensing to the people the seed of the

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<sup>169</sup> Bede, ‘Letter to Egbert,’ Dorothy Whitelock (ed.), *English Historical Documents c. 500-1042* (London, 1968) 735-745:744.

<sup>170</sup> Gildas, *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae*, T. Mommsen (ed.), MGH AA 13 (Berlin, 1898); *Gildas: The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, M. Winterbottom (ed. and tr.) (London, 1978) 38.

<sup>171</sup> See for example, Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament*, Philip Schaff (ed.), R.G. MacMullen (tr.) NPNF (Buffalo, 1888) Sermon 96, who speaks of people as ‘dearly beloved, Catholic plants.’

<sup>172</sup> Bede, *HE*, 1.29.

<sup>173</sup> *Top.* 95.

<sup>174</sup> *AB* I, xx.

divine word according to the wisdom given to him' that he 'may plant and water.'<sup>175</sup> Adam also uses these metaphors for the newly established churches in the north. Adam refers to Denmark as 'the new plantation.'<sup>176</sup> The word plant (*plantare*) is also used in relation to Adaldag's establishment of new bishoprics in Denmark.<sup>177</sup> Sweden and Norway too are part of this new plantation; Adam tells us that because of the newness of the plantation in these nations, there are no exact limits to bishoprics.<sup>178</sup> We are told 'there was a little left in Denmark of the Christianity which Ansgar had planted and which did not entirely disappear.'<sup>179</sup>

The only time we find Adalbert linked with these words is when he rejoices over the new Christian 'plantations' in the vicinity of Hamburg and sends priests to them.<sup>180</sup> Whilst this is one of the rare occasions when Adam reacts positively to Adalbert, Adam's words here are in contrast to the way he describes this very same mission of Hamburg-Bremen to the Slav regions, directly east or south east of Hamburg. This mission, which occurred during Adalbert's reign and therefore was his responsibility, is depicted as a failure because of the greed of the Saxons, the people in Adam's own region, who are the jurisdiction of the Hamburg-Bremen mission. They were, he tells us 'more intent on the payment of tribute than on the conversion of the heathen.'<sup>181</sup> The reader then has both sets of information and is left to make up his own mind. In the context of planting we are also told:

He [Adalbert] even planted gardens and vineyards on arid land. Although he put ineffectual effort into many things he tried, it was nevertheless his desire to reward magnificently the labour of all who gratified his wishes. Thus the man's lofty mind contended against the nature of the land.<sup>182</sup>

For Adam the vine is also a metaphor, building on scriptural symbolism of vineyards and gardens. The Bible abounds with this type of imagery, both in the Old and New Testaments. In the New Testament Jesus applies the word to himself when he tells us

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<sup>175</sup> AB I, xii; '*plantet et rigat*,' *Adam Bremensis*, I, xii. It is a reference to 1 Cor. 3.8.

<sup>176</sup> AB III, Lxxiv.

<sup>177</sup> Tschan renders it as 'establish,' AB II, xxvi.

<sup>178</sup> AB IV, xxxiv.

<sup>179</sup> AB I, Lii.

<sup>180</sup> AB III, xxi. Adalbert speaks of Oldenburg, Mecklenburg and Ratzeburg.

<sup>181</sup> AB III, xxiii. Adam is here citing 'the most veracious king of the Danes,' Svein.

<sup>182</sup> AB III, xxxvii.

‘I am the vine’ (John 15:1). The vine is an image of both Christ and the Christian community, the church.<sup>183</sup> Both Augustine and Gregory use the imagery of vines to represent the universal church’s history spanning from Abel to Christ.<sup>184</sup> Ambrose explains that the ‘church is the winepress of the eternal fountain since from her wells forth the juice of the heavenly wine.’<sup>185</sup> The vine as a symbol for the church was commonly used throughout Christianity. Although not an invention of the reform movement, the vine was certainly one of the powerful symbols used by the reformist papacy. Stroll speaks of how, in the twelfth century, the vine as a symbol of the living church was ‘revived most dramatically and exquisitely’ in the mosaic in the apse of San Clemente in Rome.<sup>186</sup> The Latin inscription on the mosaic reads in translation: ‘We shall symbolise the church of Christ by that vine, which the law makes to be arid, but the cross makes to be flourishing.’<sup>187</sup> What the law refers to in this citation is a debated issue but Stroll believes it to be a reference to the secular empire.<sup>188</sup> However, to claim that Adam had such thoughts in mind would be speculative. When Adam speaks of the gardens and vineyards that fail to thrive on arid land, his words recall the parable of the sower (Matthew 13). It relates how seeds sown on good soil will bear fruit whereas the seeds that fall on stony or thorny ground wither away. Pseudo-Bede’s exposition of Matthew 13 explains that good soil signifies a perfect heart; one that faithfully spreads the word of God.<sup>189</sup>

The enduring image in the narrative is that Adalbert, in Adam’s eyes, attained nothing of real value; like the dry and un-watered soil, his life bore no fruit. Adalbert did not have the perfect heart that Bede speaks of. Gregory uses the metaphors of vine and fruit to describe a hypocrite: ‘the hypocrite, like a fruitful and neglected vine, cannot

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<sup>183</sup> Jennifer O’Reilly, ‘Signs of the Cross. Medieval religious images and the interpretation of Scripture,’ in T. Ayers (ed.), *The History of British Art, 600-1600* (Tate Britain and the Yale Center for British Art, 2008) 176-197:182.

<sup>184</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia* (Homilies on the Gospels) Raymond Étaix (ed.) CCSL 141 (Brepols, 1999) homily 19. Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of St John*, John Gibb (tr.), Philip Shaff (ed.) NPNF, First Series, Vol 7 (Buffalo, 1888) 81.1-4.

<sup>185</sup> Ambrose, *De Spiritu Sancto* (On the Holy Spirit), H. de Romestin, E. de Romestin and H.T.F. Duckworth (tr.) NPNF Vol. 10 (1896), prologue to Emperor Gratian, Book I, 10.

<sup>186</sup> Vine as a symbol of the church, see: Stroll, *Symbols as Power: The Papacy Following the Investiture Contest*, 118.

<sup>187</sup> Stroll, *Symbols as Power: The Papacy Following the Investiture Contest*, 119.

<sup>188</sup> Stroll, *Symbols as Power: The Papacy Following the Investiture Contest*, 119. Dr. Sofia Georgiadou, a Byzantine scholar, points out that the law generally refers to the Old Testament, whereas the cross symbolises the New Testament.

<sup>189</sup> ‘*Bona terra significat corda perfecta, in quibus verbum dei in alio generat fidem.*’ Pseudo-Bede, *In Matthaei Evangelium Expositio* (Migne, PL 92) liber II, 13.



keep his fruit, because the cluster of good works lies prone on the ground.’<sup>190</sup> Here, Gregory depicts a man resembling Adam’s portrait of Adalbert: a man ‘raised to the higher posts, he is fed high with applause,’ but when retribution comes ‘he will perceive that he did foolishly, when, for the gratification of applause, he receives the sentence of God’s rebuke.’<sup>191</sup>

When Adam writes about vine and vineyard, he places himself in the context of a person working within the church. By implication—but not fully stated—Adalbert is portrayed as outside the vineyard, as if he is not actively participating in the work. Adam tells us he himself prefers to ‘bear the burden of the heat of the day in the vineyard of the Lord rather to stand idle outside the vineyard.’<sup>192</sup> The toiling inside the vineyard goes back to a parable in Matthew 20. In this story, a householder (*paterfamilias*) employs people in his vineyard, at the beginning of the day, at the third, sixth, and ninth hour, and pays those employed later the same reward as those who have worked longer. Gregory the Great, like Bede, saw this parable as a history of God’s association with man. Those that started at the earliest hour of the day represent the time of Adam, the first man created by God; Noah appears at the third hour; the Patriarch Abraham at the sixth hour; and Moses at the ninth hour. At the eleventh hour, Christ will appear, and those who have toiled will get their reward.<sup>193</sup> Bede, like Gregory before him, interpreted the vineyard as the church and the workers in it as clergy.<sup>194</sup>

The image of the Lord’s vineyard was a favourite in narratives dealing with the conversion of the Baltic. We can see this allusion to the church as a vineyard in a letter from Pope Gregory VII to two Swedish kings regarding the conversion of ‘those that live at the end of the world’—a reference to the location of Sweden. In his letter to the Swedish kings Inge and Halstan in 1080 Pope Gregory writes that those that go to work in the vineyard of the Lord in the eleventh hour have the same prospect of getting

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<sup>190</sup> Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, (Vol. I) 7.71.

<sup>191</sup> Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (Vol. 1) 7.71.

<sup>192</sup> *AB*, prologue.

<sup>193</sup> Bede, *In Matthaei Evangelium Exposito* (PL 92) Liber III, xx.

<sup>194</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Evangelia* (Homilies on the Gospels) PL 76, homily 19, p. 1154 (it expounds on Matthew 20:1-16); Bede, *In Matthaei Evangelium Exposito* (PL 92) Liber III, xx. David Lyle Jeffrey (ed.), *A Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature* (Grand Rapids, 1992) 430.

the reward as those that first entered the vineyard.<sup>195</sup> The people that now enter the vineyard in the late hour are the people of the north. Adam refers to the same issue when he uses the term vineyard in relation to three bishops who were consecrated for the north but instead stayed at home: they “‘remained idle outside the vineyard seeking ‘their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s’” (Matthew 20:3, Philippians 2.21).<sup>196</sup> Adam, in contrast to these idle bishops, saw himself as toiling inside the vineyard.

Adalbert, in Adam’s eyes, managed to achieve nothing of lasting value. Adam tells us he ‘tears down in order to build and exchanges the square with the round,’ a quote from Horace’s *Epistles*. Horace’s verse refers to inconsistency in the context of avarice and greed, thus for the well-educated reader adding to the negative image of Adalbert.<sup>197</sup> Adam laments that Adalbert is ‘making a tenancy of a provostship and a provostship of a hospital.’<sup>198</sup> He also pulled down a city wall ‘as if it were not at all necessary’ to use its stones for the new church in Bremen.<sup>199</sup> At another time Adalbert, at great expense and with much effort, had trees felled on a hill near Hamburg in order to build a canonry and a community for monks; it turned into a remarkable failure.<sup>200</sup> Instead of offering protection, ‘certain of our men’ as Adam puts it, robbed those they had been put there to protect, a mirror image of what Adalbert had done to Bremen. The place was later levelled by a local uprising. Adalbert started lavish building projects because he wanted to ‘leave a memorial of his nobility everywhere,’ a contrast to Adam’s own modesty, which was the humbleness of a monk.<sup>201</sup> Glorifying oneself does not always work: one of these new buildings, a stone house, suddenly slipped and fell to pieces in the archbishop’s presence.<sup>202</sup> Whilst this is described as an actual event it also works as a metaphor for the unsound policies of Adalbert. In Adam’s narrative, Adalbert in many ways fails miserably; everything he touches comes to nothing, his actions are pointless, destructive and in vain.

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<sup>195</sup> On the popularity of these citations in a conversion context in the Baltic, see Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, ‘Pope Honorius III and Missions and Crusades in the Baltic Region,’ in Alan V. Murray (ed.), *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier* (Farnham, 2009) 103-122:109; *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, Gregorius VII’s letter to Inge and Halstan, 1080 (SDHK 169).

<sup>196</sup> AB III, Lxxvii.

<sup>197</sup> AB III, Lxii. Horace, *Satires and Epistles*, Smith Palmer Bovie (tr.) (Chicago, 1959), Epistle 1.100.

<sup>198</sup> AB III, Lxii.

<sup>199</sup> AB III, iii.

<sup>200</sup> AB III, xxvi.

<sup>201</sup> AB, III, ix.

<sup>202</sup> AB, III, x.

In Adam's eyes what Adalbert sought was ultimately deceptive. Secular glory has no significance. This is evident from the way Adam describes Adalbert's death. What use was all the worldly glory, Adam asks, as Adalbert was dying:

Oh how false is the good fortune of mortal life! How much to be shunned the courting of honours! Of what avail to you now, O venerable father Adalbert, are the things you always prized, the glory of the world, multitudes of people, exalted nobility?<sup>203</sup>

In Adam's account, even Adalbert's death is not celebrated with the same distinction as that of previous archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen. Adam implies that he died unprepared, without the last rites. Whilst he tells us he is in tears when writing, his words are harsh: 'Now...the sinner is stricken, now he is forced to depart unrepentant so that dying he forgets himself, who while he lived had forgotten God.'<sup>204</sup> Adam uses the words 'the glorious metropolitan' about Adalbert, when stating how he died alone and in agony, still hopeful of recovery.<sup>205</sup> This appears absurd in the context as he then continues with the famous closing words from Virgil's *Aeneid*: 'life passed indignant to the shades below.'<sup>206</sup> It is the very last line of the poem, where Aeneas' victory over Turnus ends without triumph but with Aeneas killing the now defenceless Turnus, an ending that fills the reader with unease. That Adam depicts Adalbert's passing in this manner, with reference to a stricken sinner and an allusion to a classical Roman underworld, is an unusual way of describing an archbishop's death.

The depiction of Adalbert's death can be juxtaposed with the way earlier archbishops' deaths are reported by Adam. For example, on Ansgar's death, Rimbert testified 'to the sanctity he had perceived in the man of God.'<sup>207</sup> It can also be contrasted with the death of Unni, bishop of Bremen and apostle of the north, whose 'soul, attended by a great triumphal procession of souls, ascended to the heights the heavenly fatherland to rejoice forever.'<sup>208</sup> Adalward, who according to Adalbert had usurped the bishop seat

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<sup>203</sup> AB III, Lxvi.

<sup>204</sup> AB III, Lxv. Adam tells us he is adapting a citation from 'a holy man,' but the source Adam is using is unknown.

<sup>205</sup> AB III, Lxv.

<sup>206</sup> AB III, Lxv; '*vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras.*' Adam *Bremensis*, III, Lxv; Virgil, *Aeneid*, H.R. Fairclough (tr.) (Cambridge, MA, 1916) XII, 952.

<sup>207</sup> AB I, xxxiv.

<sup>208</sup> AB I, Lxii.

at Skara, also went to paradise: he ‘yielded his indomitable flesh to the earth as his spirit, crowned, sought heaven.’<sup>209</sup>

Bede’s letter to Egbert, bishop of York, is relevant to the discussion of Adalbert’s character, as it relates to ideals of pastoral care. Both Adam and Bede are troubled by what they see as falling moral standards around them; Bede speaks of monastic life taken over by ‘loose living and fornication.’<sup>210</sup> Both believe that bishops should set the standards and be examples of good living but what happens to the bishop who fails his duties? Bede poses the question of what will happen to a bishop at the hour of his death if, during his lifetime, he has not ‘taken pains to correct either himself from evil by the acts of good living, or the people subject to him by chastening and admonishing.’<sup>211</sup> Bede’s response to this question is valid also for Adam. To Bede the answer is made clear in the gospel where God says to the useless slave: ‘Cast ye him out into the outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’<sup>212</sup> Adam however, is reluctant to be so definite about Adalbert’s situation after his death. Whilst he does suggest that Adalbert dies without the last rites he also produced a very brief parallel account of Adalbert’s death which contradicts his own statement that Adalbert died alone without the last rites.

Here Adam tells us that ‘some assert that a few spectators were at hand,’ and ‘in their presence he did bitter penance in his last hour for all the vexation he had caused by his deeds.’<sup>213</sup> It is again an example of Adam’s ambiguity. Adalbert, as Barnwell noted, ‘is both saved and dammed.’<sup>214</sup> Ultimately the ambiguity reflects two sides of the investiture contest: Adam is ‘writing an account that is acceptable to all.’<sup>215</sup> However, the few lines about the bitter penance are swallowed up by the longer, less benign depiction of his death, which more easily plants itself in the mind of the reader. Adam’s account of Adalbert’s life, as his death, is a warning to the reader to take heed of

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<sup>209</sup> *AB* IV, xxiii.

<sup>210</sup> Bede, ‘Letter to Egbert,’ Dorothy Whitelock (tr.), 735-745:741.

<sup>211</sup> Bede, ‘Letter to Egbert’ Whitelock (tr.), 735-745:736.

<sup>212</sup> Bede, ‘Letter to Egbert,’ Whitelock (tr.), 735-745:736. The gnashing of teeth is a reference to Matthew 25:30.

<sup>213</sup> *AB* III, Lxv.

<sup>214</sup> Barnwell, ‘Missionaries and Changing Views of the Other from the Ninth to the Eleventh Centuries,’ 121.

<sup>215</sup> Barnwell, ‘Missionaries and Changing Views of the Other from the Ninth to the Eleventh Centuries,’ 121.

Christian values. As Goetz recently remarked, Adalbert's death 'was meant to indicate the fallacious nature of secular prosperity and vain ambition.'<sup>216</sup>

### **Gerald of Wales: Conquest, Reform and Crusades**

Unlike Adam, Gerald of Wales was a well-known person, a cleric and prolific writer from a family of power and influence.<sup>217</sup> His ethnicity was complex. He was born in Wales and was both Welsh and Anglo-Norman by descent.<sup>218</sup> Gerald's immediate family was not only well-connected and powerful but also active in the English colonisation of Ireland. His uncle Maurice Fitzgerald was one of the leaders in the earliest phase of the attempted conquest of Ireland.<sup>219</sup>

Although he had affection for Wales, it seems that he never learned to speak the Welsh language; he needed an interpreter to speak to his fellow countrymen.<sup>220</sup> He was Gerald of Wales, not Gerald the Welshman, as Bartlett points out in his discussion of Gerald's background and affiliations—he was above the Welsh in status.<sup>221</sup> Although proud of his ancestry from Welsh royalty, he did not feel himself to be part of the Welsh people, and his views on the Welsh were ambiguous. He also felt that his mixed background was a hindrance to his career, that his talents were not recognised or rewarded.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Goetz, 'Constructing the Past,' 17-51:25.

<sup>217</sup> A complete list of Gerald's work in Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, appendix 1, p.174. Comprehensive portraits of Gerald: Brynley F. Roberts, *Gerald of Wales* (Cardiff, 1982); Michael Richter, 'Gerald of Wales: A Reassessment on the 750th Anniversary of His Death,' *Traditio* 29 (1973) 379-390. Gerald also wrote of his life and deeds: *De Rebus a se gestis*, J.S. Brewer (ed.), Rolls Series, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera* Vol. I, I, 1. Now translated and published with further extracts from his writing as *The Autobiography of Giraldus Cambrensis*, H.E. Butler (tr. and ed., intro by C. H. Williams) (London, 1937, new ed. with further reading by John Gillingham, 2005).

<sup>218</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 14. John Gillingham's guide to further reading in the *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.) 371, explains that whilst Gerald was often described as Welsh/Norman, his 'shifting sense of identity' is now under discussion.

<sup>219</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, intro. xxi. Maurice appears throughout the book, starting with his arrival and the siege of Dublin in I.11.

<sup>220</sup> Gerald needed an interpreter to speak to the Welsh people: Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis*, II, xix; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 102.

<sup>221</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 19-29. See also Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 24-29.

<sup>222</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 55f. On Gerald's ethnicity see: John Gillingham, 'The English Invasion of Ireland,' in Brendan Bradshaw, Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley (eds.), *Representing Ireland, Literature and the Origins of Conflict 1524-1660* (Cambridge, 1993) 24-42 (reprinted in *The English in the Twelfth Century*); Yoko Wada, 'Gerald on Gerald, Self-Presentation by Giraldus Cambrensis,' in Christopher Harper-Bill (ed.), *Proceedings of the Battle Conference in Dublin, 1997* (Woodbridge, 1998) 223-246.

Culturally, he belonged to the Latin-speaking European elite.<sup>223</sup> Like Adam, Gerald was extremely well-read. He finished his education in Paris, where he also taught.<sup>224</sup> In contrast to Adam, who appears not to have signed his name on his work—although we cannot know this for certain as there is no original manuscript—Gerald was not humble about his authorship or his talents. He had no qualms about describing the *Topography* as a ‘far from negligible work.’<sup>225</sup> He was proud of his work and wanted recognition as a writer.

Gerald was a zealous reformer whose interest in church reform was sustained throughout his life.<sup>226</sup> His fervent wish was to attain a bishopric, a platform from which to apply reform, but he never gained the position he sought, the bishopric of St David’s in Wales, which had been held by his uncle.<sup>227</sup> His repeated applications for the post were constantly refused by King Henry II (1133-1189) or by the Archbishop of Canterbury. His own explanation for this refusal was that the king perceived his family to be too powerful for him to be appointed to such a post.<sup>228</sup> Gerald’s family exerted too much influence in Wales, a region which was not fully settled by the Anglo-Normans, but remained until the end of the thirteenth century ‘a patchwork of Norman lordships and Welsh principalities’ with boundaries and political control constantly shifting.<sup>229</sup> In this unstable political context, his Welsh ancestry made him a person whose motives could not be trusted.<sup>230</sup> However, there may have been other reasons for him not attaining the post he sought, as he gives the impression of having been a difficult and quarrelsome person.<sup>231</sup> After his many disappointments in failing to attain the bishopric of St David’s, he rejected life at court and spent his last years in Lincoln where he died in 1223, c. seventy-seven years old.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Boivin, *L’Irlande au Moyen Age*, 46f; Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 12. On Gerald’s classical learning: A.A. Goddu and R.H. Rouse, ‘Gerald of Wales and the Florilegium Angelicum,’ *Speculum* 52 (1977) 488-521.

<sup>224</sup> Gerald was in Paris c. 1165-72 and 1176-79. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 11-14.

<sup>225</sup> This is how Gerald himself described his work at the time of presenting it to Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury. Gerald of Wales, *The Journey through Wales and The Description of Wales*, Lewis Thorpe (tr. and intro.) (London, 1978) 1.2.

<sup>226</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 31-53.

<sup>227</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 44.

<sup>228</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis*, I, x; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 61.

<sup>229</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 19.

<sup>230</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 22f.

<sup>231</sup> See for example R. B. C. Huygens, ‘Une lettre de Giraud le Cambrien à propos de ses ouvrages historiques,’ *Latomus* 24 (1965) 90-100.

<sup>232</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis; Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), endnote, 360.

Gerald first visited his relations in Ireland 1183, in the aftermath of the invasion.<sup>233</sup> He again visited Ireland in the employ of Prince John, Henry's youngest son, in 1185.<sup>234</sup> In Ireland he gathered information for his two works on the island and the nation, the *Topography*, and the *Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland* (1189). Gerald claims that he collected all facts in the *Topography* himself. He tells us he 'examined everything carefully,' and took note of all that was new to him and what he thought was of interest. From his collected notes he chose those facts he 'thought worthy of being remembered.'<sup>235</sup> Therefore the narrative is no haphazard collection of facts but the result of a selection process. Nevertheless, in spite of Gerald insisting that the work is a result of his own observations or eyewitness accounts, his work was influenced by classical authors as well as later narratives. The *Topography* contains elements of medieval bestiaries and miracle books. He alludes to or quotes from writers like Ovid, Horace, Virgil and Lucan, just like Adam, and like Adam he cites the Bible and church fathers. Boivin, who calls him one of the most well-read men of his time, lists twenty-nine sources used by Gerald.<sup>236</sup> Like Adam, he is also influenced by earlier medieval sources. He cites Bede, and when relating Irish history, he is informed by accounts of Irish history in *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* (*The Book of the Taking of Ireland*), a collection of poems, prose and myths relating to the origins and history of the Irish, and the twelfth-century Anglo-Norman historian Geoffrey of Monmouth.<sup>237</sup> In addition, Gerald's depiction of the Irish was influenced by St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), the famous church reformer. In some cases Gerald points out that his sources are wrong, as he does with both Bede and Solinus.<sup>238</sup> He has a political agenda in asserting that these writers sometimes can get their facts wrong, as both expressed positive views on Ireland or the Irish that Gerald does not share. The classical influence on his depiction of the Irish is evident in his use of stereotypes from ancient sources, a subject discussed in chapter three of this thesis.

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<sup>233</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 16-17.

<sup>234</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 21.

<sup>235</sup> *Top.* dedication.

<sup>236</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 47; sources cited by Gerald, 396.

<sup>237</sup> *Top.* p.133, footnote 42. *Lebor Gabála Éirenn, The Books of the Taking of Ireland*, R.A. Stewart Macalister (ed.), Irish Text Society (Dublin, 1938). Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*, D.S. Brewer (ed.) (Cambridge, 1985-1991). *The History of the Kings of Britain*, Lewis Thorpe (tr. and intro.) (Harmondsworth, 1966); it will henceforth be abbreviated as *Historia Regum Britanniae*.

<sup>238</sup> *Top.* 2.

Like Adam, Gerald has a didactic purpose in writing. As a writer he modelled himself on classical writers and wished to provide moral instruction.<sup>239</sup> He explains the educational merit of his work in his dedication to King Henry. In his dedication, Gerald explains that he could, like others, send the king gold, falcons, or hawks, but he believes that ‘a high-minded prince’—a wording which both flatters and brings with it an expectation of high-minded behaviour—would set little value on something that easily comes to be and just as easily perishes. Instead he chooses to present the king with ‘those things which rather cannot be lost,’ and thereby are infinitely more valuable.<sup>240</sup> In this he is referring to his writing. ‘By them I, through you, instruct posterity,’ Gerald states.<sup>241</sup> With Henry’s support, Gerald wants to instruct future generations of kings.

However, it is not certain that the king or his sons ever read Gerald’s work; as David argues, if they had Gerald would surely have mentioned it.<sup>242</sup> Gerald certainly wanted his work to attract attention; he performed three days of public readings of his text in Oxford in 1188.<sup>243</sup> That he aimed for an influential readership is evident from his many dedications of his works to high ranking church-men.<sup>244</sup> He tirelessly reworked his manuscripts, and, as David suggests, the number of single text codices suggests a concerted effort to disseminate this work.<sup>245</sup>

### **Gerald of Wales in the Context of Conquest, Colonisation and Reform**

Gerald’s immediate context is the English invasion of Ireland. King Henry II was powerful and ruled over a growing empire which consisted of a large part of what is now France, from the Pyrenees to Normandy, as well as England.<sup>246</sup> In 1155, Henry

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<sup>239</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 12. Boivin, *L’Irlande au Moyen Age*, 47.

<sup>240</sup> *Top*, prologue.

<sup>241</sup> Cleaver suggests the instruction is aimed at Henry’s sons. Cleaver, ‘Kings Behaving Badly,’ 151-160:154.

<sup>242</sup> David, ‘Looking East and West: The Reception and Dissemination of the *Topographia Hibernica* and the *Itinerarium ad Partes Orientales* in England [1185-1500],’ 132.

<sup>243</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis*, II, xvi; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 97.

<sup>244</sup> David, ‘Looking East and West,’ 132.

<sup>245</sup> David, ‘Looking East and West,’ 132.

<sup>246</sup> Robin Frame, *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369* (Dublin, 2012); Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland: The English in Louth, 1170-1330* (Cambridge, 1999); Seán Duffy, *Ireland in the Middle Ages* (Basingstoke, 1997); R.R. Davies, *Domination and Conquest: The Experience of Scotland, Ireland and Wales 1100-1300* (Cambridge, 1990, reprint 2006); Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*; Brannigan, ‘A Particular Vice of that People,’ 121-130; Martin, ‘Gerald of Wales, Norman Reporter on Ireland,’ 279-292; Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades* (Cambridge, 1987); J. Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History* (London, 2005); Diarmuid Scully, ‘Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux’s *Life of Malachy*: Representation and Context,’ in Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds.), *Ireland and Europe in the*



sought consent from the English Pope Adrian IV (r. 1154-59) to invade Ireland, a request that was granted.<sup>247</sup> At that time, Henry postponed his expedition to Ireland, but more than a decade later, when English Lords had already begun the conquest and colonisation of the island, Henry claimed sovereignty over the nation.<sup>248</sup> He made a brief visit to Ireland in 1170 to declare himself Lord of Ireland. Seven years later he gave that title to his son John.<sup>249</sup> At the time of the writing of the first recension of the *Topography*, Gerald was working in the king's household and evidently, as can be gauged from his works on Ireland, was supportive of the conquest and its agenda of reforming the Irish church.<sup>250</sup> Although Gerald may not have agreed with how the reform of the Irish church developed under the English invaders, he certainly defended the invasion in his writing. As Brannigan points out, he expresses few regrets on being part of the colonising nation in the *Topography* or *The Conquest of Ireland*.<sup>251</sup>

The purpose of the invasion of Ireland was, according to Gerald, for the English monarchy to 'exalt and uplift' the church in Ireland.<sup>252</sup> Gerald tells us that King Henry 'obtained leave from the Church in Rome to enter Ireland and subdue it for himself; as is openly declared in the Privilege of Pope Adrian.'<sup>253</sup> The document that Pope Adrian issued, *Laudabiliter* ('it is praiseworthy'), praises the English king as enlarging the boundaries of the church and bringing true Christianity to the Irish.<sup>254</sup> The text of the document is supplied by Gerald in the *Conquest of Ireland*.<sup>255</sup> Brannigan argues that Gerald was well-placed to influence policy in Ireland.<sup>256</sup> He certainly used his position as a writer when transcribing this document into his narrative, thereby spreading a papal bull which legitimises the conquest to a wider audience, with its views of the Irish as sinful barbarians and thus in need of such intervention:

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*Twelfth Century: Reform and Renewal* (Dublin, 2006) 239-256; Scully, 'Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,' 49-62.

<sup>247</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.5.

<sup>248</sup> Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire*, 27-29.

<sup>249</sup> Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire*, 29; Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 55.

<sup>250</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 33-35.

<sup>251</sup> Brannigan, 'A Particular Vice of that People,' 121-130:125.

<sup>252</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, x; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 87.

<sup>253</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, x; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 87.

<sup>254</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.5.

<sup>255</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.5. Anne J. Duggan, 'The Power of Documents: The Curious Case of *Laudabiliter*,' in Brenda Bolton and Christine Meek (eds.), *Aspects of Power and Authority in the Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2007) 251-275; on the various copies and their origin see especially 261.

<sup>256</sup> Brannigan, 'A Particular Vice of that People,' 121-130:122.

In right praiseworthy fashion, and to good purpose your Majesty is considering how to spread abroad the glorious name of Christ on earth, and thus store up for yourself in heaven the reward of eternal bliss, while striving, as a true Catholic prince should, to enlarge the boundaries of the church, to reveal the truth of the Christian faith to peoples still untaught and barbarous, and to root out the weeds of vice from the Lord's field. You seek the counsel and favour of the apostolic see in order that you may more expeditiously achieve this end. We are confident that in this matter, with God's help you will attain that degree of success which is in proportion to the loftiness of your aims....that Ireland, and indeed all islands on which Christ, the sun of justice, has faith, belong to the jurisdiction of Blessed Peter and the holy Roman church is a fact beyond doubt...to make the people obedient to the laws, and to root out from there the weeds of vices, that you are willing to pay St Peter the annual tax of one penny from each household.<sup>257</sup>

The claim that all islands belong to the Holy Roman Church is a reference to *The Donation of Constantine*. This eighth-century forgery refers to events of the fourth century: Pope Sylvester curing the Roman Emperor Constantine of leprosy, after which Constantine was baptised and in gratitude gave certain grants to the church. In the document Rome was given supremacy over the other principal sees of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople, named landed estates as well as various islands.<sup>258</sup> It is the phrase 'various islands' that was vague enough to be used by popes to back up territorial claims over islands.<sup>259</sup> In the *Laudabiliter* the English are praised for expanding the boundaries of the church, when Ireland in reality was already under the jurisdiction of the Roman church. Later papal letters, the three so-called September letters issued by Pope Alexander III (1159-1181), one addressed to Irish priests, a second to Irish nobility and a third to Henry II, also endorsed this image of the Irish as barbarous and full of vice.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.5.

<sup>258</sup> See Johannes Fried, 'Donation of Constantine' and the 'Constitutum Constantini': *The Misinterpretation of a Fiction and its Original Meaning. With a Contribution by Wolfram Brandes: 'The Satraps of Constantine'* (Berlin, 2007). (Note that Constantinople was not a principal see at the time of Constantine the Great.)

<sup>259</sup> The Donation of Constantine, clause 13, claims imperial largesse 'in Judea, Greece, Asia, Thrace, Africa, and Italy and in the various islands.' Robinson gives examples of popes using this clause to claim jurisdiction over islands, for example Sardinia (Gregory VII) and Corsica (Urban II). Robinson, *The Papacy*, 309f.

<sup>260</sup> J. F. O'Doherty, 'Rome and the Anglo-Norman Invasion of Ireland,' *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 42 (1933) 131-145. The September letters are also discussed in Anne J. Duggan, 'Totius christianitatis caput. The Popes and the Princes,' in Brenda Bolton and Anne J. Duggan, (eds.), *Adrian IV, the English Pope (1154-1159)* (London, 2003) 105-155:151f. See also Laura Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200* (Cambridge, 2007) 176.

When Gerald's king Henry sought papal consent for his invasion, he followed the example of his grandfather William.<sup>261</sup> The Norman Conquest of England, a century earlier, also took place after papal consent. Although the purpose of implementing reform was not stated, this is in fact what took place after the conquest. William of Malmesbury described the English as non-conforming, and barbarians, in a similar manner to how the Irish were depicted a century later.<sup>262</sup> A papal banner was granted to Duke William II of Normandy in 1066 to use during the invasion against what was seen as a perjured English king.<sup>263</sup> William of Malmesbury tells us the invasion was sanctioned only after careful thought, after which the pope delivered a standard to King William as a token of his support.<sup>264</sup> The mediator between king and pope was Lanfranc, a long-time advisor to William, and also a key figure urging reform of the Irish church.<sup>265</sup> He was also a friend and former schoolmaster of Pope Alexander II.<sup>266</sup>

This friendship between a diplomat and a pope mirrors a similar relationship when Pope Adrian IV backed the English invasion of Ireland. When Henry looked for an ambassador to send to the pope, he picked John of Salisbury, a most suitable person to obtain papal consent to invade Ireland, as John was an old friend of Pope Adrian.<sup>267</sup> Sources contemporary with the Norman Conquest of England speak of the invasion as being necessary for the welfare and reform of the church, sanctioned by God.<sup>268</sup> Adam of Bremen, writing from the far away North-Sea coast, and in no way involved in the events but driven by his interest in church reform, saw William's conquest of England as a good deed performed to raise the standard of the church. The 'victorious Bastard'

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<sup>261</sup> William of Poitiers, *Deeds of Duke William*, R.H.C. Davis and M. Chibnall (ed. and tr.) (Oxford, 1998) 2.3. The approval of the papacy is also evident in a letter from Gregory VII to William I; *Registrum Gregorii VII*, vol. 1., E. Caspar (ed.) (Berlin, 1893) 101; English translation in David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway (eds.), *English Historical Documents 1042-1189*, Vol II, 640; Sally N. Vaughn, *Anselm of Bec and Robert of Meulan: The Innocence of the Dove and the Wisdom of the Serpent* (Berkeley, 1987) 46.

<sup>262</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum, The History of the English Kings*, R.A.B. Mynors (ed. and tr., completed by R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom) (Oxford, 1998) iii.245. It will henceforth be written as *Gesta Regum Anglorum*. Date for the issue of *Gesta Regum Anglorum* as 1126 in Malcolm Thomson, *William of Malmesbury* (Woodbridge, 1987) 6.

<sup>263</sup> Robinson, *The Papacy*, 324.

<sup>264</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, iii.238.

<sup>265</sup> Clare Downham, 'English and the Irish-Sea Zone in the Eleventh Century,' in John Gillingham (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies* 26 (2003) 54-73; Marie-Therese Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge, 2010) 39f.

<sup>266</sup> Vaughn, *Anselm of Bec*, 46.

<sup>267</sup> Christopher N.L. Brooke, 'Adrian IV and John of Salisbury,' in Brenda Bolton and Anne J. Duggan (eds.), *Adrian IV, the English Pope (1154-1159)* (London, 2003) 3-13:6f.

<sup>268</sup> Christopher Daniell, *From Norman Conquest to Magna Carta: England 1066-1215* (London, 2003) 27; Marjorie Chibnall, *The Debate on the Norman Conquest* (Manchester, 1999) 12.

in the following citation is William, who, as Adam tells us, ‘on account of his illegitimate descent bore the byname ‘the Bastard.’’<sup>269</sup>

the victorious Bastard avenged God, Whom the English had offended, by expelling nearly all the clerics and monks who lived out of conformity with the rule. After doing away with these scandals, he established the philosopher Lanfranc in the Church as a teacher.<sup>270</sup>

Adam is vociferously in favour of this event—a stark contrast to his silence on the Investiture Controversy ten years later. The invasion was, as Adam explains, God’s vengeance on an errant people.<sup>271</sup> We see here Adam’s zeal for reform. Adam, it appears, justifies the invasion of England as, to his mind, it was done in order to reform monks and clerics who had lapsed from righteous living. If the clergy does not practise virtuous living their congregations will be led into error. Adam praises William as he brought in Lanfranc, a continental bishop, ‘as a teacher.’<sup>272</sup> Lanfranc had already established reform on the continent before arriving in England: ‘Through his zeal, both before in Gaul and afterwards in England, many were inspired to adopt a godly way of life.’<sup>273</sup> Lanfranc wished to extend the claim of primacy of Canterbury, not only in England but also Ireland.<sup>274</sup> Adam does not comment, or is unaware, of this issue. Adam implies that the English deserve to be conquered in order that reform can take place as they had been slack in their faith. It is in contrast to his view of the conversion of polytheists, where Adam is firmly against conversion by force or conquest. Polytheists should be gently persuaded to convert, as we will discuss in chapter three of this thesis. Gerald has the same positive view of the conquest of Ireland as Adam has of the Norman Conquest of England. It would correct errors in the church and bring reform to Christians. His views on the Norman Conquest of England are more complicated. He was, according to Bartlett, proud of his Norman descent.<sup>275</sup> When

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<sup>269</sup> AB III, Lii.

<sup>270</sup> AB III, Lii.

<sup>271</sup> AB III, Lii.

<sup>272</sup> AB III, Lii.

<sup>273</sup> AB III, Lii.

<sup>274</sup> F.X. Martin, ‘Ireland in the Time of St. Bernard, St. Malachy, St. Laurence O’Toole,’ *Seanchas Ard Mhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society* 15, no. 1 (1992) 1-35:9. Bartlett tells us that the advance of the English church had been ‘frustrated in Scotland and Ireland, largely through the alliance of the Scottish and the Irish Churches with the papacy.’ Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 46. See also Martin Brett, ‘Canterbury’s Perspective on Church Reform and Ireland, 1070-1115,’ in Damian Bracken, and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds.), *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century: Reform and Renewal* (Dublin, 2006) 13-35.

<sup>275</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 80.

writing the *Topography* he was still positive towards the Angevin dynasty—flattering them in hope of patronage—however, when he did not receive the recognition he thought he deserved he became hostile towards the ruling dynasty, writing of ‘how the Norman tyrants ruled in the island, not naturally or legitimately, but through an inversion of order.’<sup>276</sup> Thus, in spite of being proud of his Norman ancestry, his personal feelings of being rejected by the Angevins later influenced his view of Normans and the Norman Conquest.

### **Crisis in the Centre: Gerald, Henry II and the Crusades**

Internationally, from a western Christian perspective, the burning issue of the time was the crusade to recapture Jerusalem. In Gerald’s words, Jerusalem was lost to ‘enemies of faith,’ referring to the Muslims under the leadership of Saladin.<sup>277</sup> For Gerald, the crusade to save Jerusalem from this fate was of outmost importance. Gerald had high expectations of Henry. From Gerald’s perspective it seemed that the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Heraclius, who came to the English court in 1185, had singled out Henry of all the kings in Europe to participate in the defence of Jerusalem.<sup>278</sup> Gerald believed that Heraclius sought Henry’s leadership qualities.<sup>279</sup> For a short time Gerald saw Henry as the possible saviour of Jerusalem, a man of unlimited capabilities, as can be seen by his calling Henry ‘a western Alexander.’<sup>280</sup> Alexander the Great conquered the entire known world to its very limit, Henry, it is implied, has the same potential. Gerald clearly considers the prospect of Henry being chosen to lead the crusade as an honour:

What a great honour for the king and his realm that, ignoring and bypassing all other emperors, kings and princes, someone should come to this furthest corner of the world, almost another world in the far-flung fastness of the Atlantic shore, to seek help in such a vital matter, as if this bid to help the Holy Land could find no place in the preoccupations of the central part of the world!<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Principis Instructione*, G.F. Warner (ed.), *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, RS, Vol. 7 (London, 1861-1891) p.302, 3.327, translated and cited by Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 80.

<sup>277</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.26.

<sup>278</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.26.

<sup>279</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.27.

<sup>280</sup> *Top.* 121.

<sup>281</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.26.

Here Gerald firmly locates England in the corner of the world, so far that it is ‘almost another world.’ In ancient and medieval geographical thought, England and Ireland were seen as locations at the very limit of the world. In the ancient world, the core civilised cultures were centred on Greece and Rome, but from a medieval Christian perspective, the centre of the world was Jerusalem, the place from which Christianity arose to spread to the entire world. In the words of the Father of the Church, Augustine: ‘The fruit of the earth was first in Jerusalem. For from thence began the Church.’<sup>282</sup> Jerusalem, the most precious place in the world, was now in Muslim hands. England now had a chance to give something back in return for the faith it had received.<sup>283</sup> For Gerald it is essential that Henry will agree to become the leader of this third crusade to save Jerusalem from the Muslims. It appears as if Gerald expected a positive reply from Henry as he tells us that many had taken up the cross, but Henry procrastinated.<sup>284</sup>

In 1187 Jerusalem fell into the hands of Saladin and the situation became even more urgent.<sup>285</sup> Gerald himself accompanied Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury on a tour of Wales in 1188 in order to gain supporters for the crusade.<sup>286</sup> But Henry delayed and when he took the oath Jerusalem was already lost to the Muslims.<sup>287</sup> He died shortly afterwards (July, 1189). To Gerald, Henry had wasted his chance, if he had only acted promptly when asked he would have gained incomparable glory on earth, and also ‘the glory that endures forever.’<sup>288</sup> Gerald went to France with Bishop Baldwin to join the crusade, but when the king died he sought to be released from his oath as he deemed it no longer possible to undertake the journey without his financial backing.<sup>289</sup> Gerald was released from his oath but Bishop Baldwin went and died at Acre in late 1190.<sup>290</sup> Instead of committing his forces to the cause of Christianity to keep Jerusalem in Christian hands, Henry’s resources went on the conquest of Ireland. Gerald, instead of

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<sup>282</sup> Augustine, *Exposition on the Psalms*, J.E. Tweed (tr.) Philip Schaff (ed.) NPNF Vol. 8 (Buffalo, 1888), Psalm 67.9.

<sup>283</sup> See Jennifer O’Reilly, ‘The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone: Topography, Exegesis and Identity of the Angli in Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica*,’ in Jane Roberts and Leslie Webster (eds.) *Anglo-Saxon Traces* (Arizona Centre for Medieval Studies, 2011) 201-227. On centre and periphery in a Christian context see also: Patrick Geary, ‘Reflections on Historiography and the Holy: Centre and Periphery,’ in Lars Boje Mortensen (ed.), *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom c. 1000-1300* (Copenhagen, 2006) 323-29.

<sup>284</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.27. See Wilfred L. Warren, *Henry II* (London, 1973) 604-606.

<sup>285</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 607.

<sup>286</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis*, II, xviii; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 99.

<sup>287</sup> Henry taking the cross; Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.28.

<sup>288</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2, 26.

<sup>289</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis*, II, xxii; *Autobiography* Butler (ed.), 116-17.

<sup>290</sup> Boivin, *L’Irlande au Moyen Age*, 18.

going to the Holy Land to liberate Jerusalem, was sent to Ireland with Prince John, Henry's son.<sup>291</sup> Whilst the crusades to Jerusalem continued as a main focus of the Christian church, Gerald had to be content with another mission; that of spreading church reform to Ireland.

### **Gerald and the Partial Failure of the Irish Conquest**

At the time of Gerald writing the *Topography* and *The Conquest of Ireland* the English conquest was on-going but not the success it was expected to be. According to Gerald, what sealed the fate of the conquest was English behaviour in Ireland as well as the refusal of the English monarchy to help Jerusalem in the time of crisis. In *The Conquest of Ireland* Gerald described how Prince John and his followers were kindly greeted in Waterford by Irish nobles but that they themselves responded with 'contempt and derision, and showing them scant respect, pulled some of them about by their beards, which were large and flowing according the native custom.'<sup>292</sup> Prince John was only a boy, as Gerald tells us, and followed the poor advice of the young men he brought with him 'who were utterly unknown in Ireland and themselves knew nought...whereas he rebuffed the honest and discreet men whom he found there.'<sup>293</sup> The honest and discreet men already in Ireland, whose advice John rejected, were implicitly Gerald's relations. In *The Conquest of Ireland* Gerald emphasises that his own kin had been long enough in Ireland to familiarise themselves with the customs of the Irish and may well have been better advisors. He speaks with admiration of the excellent qualities of his own kin in *The Conquest of Ireland*, for example of Maurice fitzGerald.<sup>294</sup> Historians have confirmed Gerald's emphasis on his own family. Rollo argues that Gerald wants to prioritise the rights of the original invaders—his own kin—in the *Topography*.<sup>295</sup> Cleaver too sees how Gerald attributes the success of the invasion to his own kin, and shows how they are celebrated and commemorated in the marginal drawings.<sup>296</sup> The other reasons for the lack of English military success, according to Gerald, had to do with providence: the judgement of God. First, it was God's punishment for Prince John

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<sup>291</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 17.

<sup>292</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.36.

<sup>293</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, x; *Autobiography* Butler (ed.) 86.

<sup>294</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, intro xxii, see for example 2.15.

<sup>295</sup> David Rollo, 'Gerald of Wales' Topographia Hibernica: Sex and the Irish Nation,' *Romanic Review* 86, no. 2 (1995) 169-190.

<sup>296</sup> Cleaver, 'Kings Behaving Badly,' 151-160:156-158.

not having participated in the crusade.<sup>297</sup> John should have been sent to the Holy Land, as asked by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Second, John incurred the wrath of God when he did not honour God or the Church as he should have in Ireland:

he was not disposed to render any honour to God and to His Church in those parts...and yet it was more especially on account of this, to wit, that he might exalt and uplift the Church of Ireland...that his father obtained leave from the Church in Rome to enter Ireland and to subdue it for himself.<sup>298</sup>

Instead, as Gerald reports in *The Conquest of Ireland*, the English were ‘actually trying to curtail or to abrogate its ancient rights and privileges, having stripped it of its lands and possessions immediately on our arrival.’<sup>299</sup> The offence of failing to back the crusade is thus reinforced by the English army’s treatment of the church in Ireland. To Gerald this is a serious error. The English were there to ‘root out the weeds of vice from the Lord’s field,’ according to *Laudabiliter*, and not to injure the church.<sup>300</sup> To Gerald the ‘greatest of all disasters’ in what he calls ‘our new principality’ was that they ‘bestowed no new gifts upon the Church... but rather, taking away her lands and possessions forthwith, we strove to mutilate or abolish her former dignities and ancient privileges.’<sup>301</sup> The English had failed miserably with the crusade to Jerusalem and with implementing the reform in Ireland.

Gerald expands on this issue, showing how the bad behaviour of the English against the Irish church was penalised by God. He tells us how lack of leadership created irregularities in behaviour among the English forces. He makes it clear that their offences were justly punished by the Irish saints. Gerald explains the specific character of the Irish saints by comparing them to the people of the nation, applying to both sets the characteristic of vindictiveness: just as the men of Ireland are more ‘prone to anger and revenge than any other race, so in eternal death the saints of this land...are more vindictive than the saints of any other region.’<sup>302</sup> In Gerald’s narrative, the vindictiveness of the saints is directed towards the conquering English who disrespected the church. The behaviour of the errant English warrants the Irish saints’

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<sup>297</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, x; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 86.

<sup>298</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, x; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 87.

<sup>299</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.36.

<sup>300</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.5.

<sup>301</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, xi; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 88-89. See also: Brannigan, ‘A particular vice of that people,’ 121-130:125.

<sup>302</sup> *Top.* 83.



reaction, as they are defenders of their holy places. Gerald gives us several examples of English transgressions in churches or sanctuaries, the deeds often committed by archers.<sup>303</sup> The perpetrators often die, frequently with great suffering.<sup>304</sup> Gerald's accounts of their misdeeds are clear warnings against the looting of churches. Men who steal from churches are followed by curses or become insane.<sup>305</sup> Sending back loot after the offence is committed is not enough to placate the saints. The message Gerald conveys is not to offend in the first place. But it is not only the saints and sanctuaries that should be respected but also the clergy. Through a story that involves an Irish bishop in Cork, Gerald shows that God grants a request from this Irish bishop when English soldiers disobey his orders.<sup>306</sup> Thus Gerald makes it clear that also the bishops of the Irish church should be respected. He also shows that the bishop had God on his side as he was granted an astonishing harvest of wheat on land that had yielded nothing for the errant English soldiers.<sup>307</sup>

Gerald felt so strongly about the English behaviour regarding the holy places and the failure of the English to raise the standards of the church in Ireland that he tells us he twice refused the offer of an Irish bishopric: first the bishopric of Wexford (Ferns), then Leighlin.<sup>308</sup> Prince John then 'offered him the two Churches and Sees, to be converted into a single diocese, if he were willing to undertake their government.'<sup>309</sup> Again Gerald refused. In his comment to what seems like a generous offer Gerald implies that his thoughts were with the welfare of the Irish Church.

if he saw that the Earl's intent was to exalt and upraise the Church in Ireland, he would perhaps accept the honour offered him, that he might work with him and help him to that end. But since the Earl's heart was not set on this, he preferred to remain a private person than to be placed in power where he could do no good. Seeing then that the Earl made no advance toward that end, but Ireland was every day worse for his coming...<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> The archers were invariably Welsh; their identity would have been common knowledge to his readers. Rhonda Knight, 'Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles,' 55–86:78.

<sup>304</sup> *Top.* 62, 77, 79, 81; Knight, 'Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles,' 55–86:80.

<sup>305</sup> *Top.* 75, 76.

<sup>306</sup> *Top.* 78.

<sup>307</sup> *Top.* 78.

<sup>308</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, xiii; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 90.

<sup>309</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, xiii; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 90.

<sup>310</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, xiii; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 90.

His wants us to believe that he refused because he had seen that the invasion had not fulfilled its purpose, the reform of the church had not been attended to, and that he would not be granted the power to raise the standard of the church, even in a position of bishop in Ireland. However, it is likely that an Irish bishopric did not answer his ambition; he wanted the bishopric of St David's in Wales and this may well have played a part in his refusal.<sup>311</sup>

## Conclusion

The context of reform impacts on both Adam and Gerald. Adam is frustrated with the situation in Bremen, with civil strife and a poorly run diocese. He uses the *History* to hold up examples of good pastoral care, inspired by Bede and Gregory the Great, for his current bishop, Liemar, and for future bishops. Writing in the years of the Investiture Controversy, Adam does not mention these events although his bishop Liemar was explicitly involved. Whilst both Adam and Gerald are driven by church reform, Adam, unlike Gerald, sees the church as a sphere apart from secular politics. He focusses on what is important to him, pastoral care, and the missions to the north. The recently deceased archbishop Adalbert is held up as a negative example; seeking glory whilst neglecting his pastoral duties. The corruption and sloth in Bremen is in contrast to how Adam describes the Swedes and Norwegians.

Gerald, on the other hand, with the same passion for church reform, was directly involved in secular politics; he worked for the English monarchy at the time of the (then uncompleted) conquest of Ireland. He supported this enterprise, which had papal sanction, with the justification that it spread church reform. Another significant issue for Gerald was the crusades. He fervently wished King Henry would save Jerusalem from Muslim conquest, a hope that would be thwarted. Henry instead put his resources into an invasion of Ireland, which was not a total success. Gerald saw the lack of success of the conquest as a punishment from God. They were punished for English king's failure to act with haste to save Jerusalem, with the invading forces lack of respect for the Irish church as a contributing factor. This context of reform, conquest, and colonisation shapes Gerald's view of the Irish.

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<sup>311</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 44f.

## Chapter 2

### Location

#### Introduction

This chapter will analyse the location of Sweden and Norway as depicted by Adam of Bremen, and Ireland as depicted by Gerald of Wales, in the light of ancient and medieval geographical thought. Like ancient geographers, Adam and Gerald placed Sweden, Norway and Ireland on the very periphery of the world, in what was thought of as the terrible and endless Ocean that surrounded the territorial landmass of the three continents that constituted the known world. In relation to the centre of the world, Jerusalem, they were seen as remote islands, the last habitations of mankind. These locations will influence Adam's and Gerald's depiction of Sweden, Norway and Ireland, and of their inhabitants, as we will see in the next chapter.

In ancient times and the late antique period, as in the Middle Ages, the mere mention of a location would prepare the reader for what to expect of its inhabitants. For this reason writers of these eras often start their narratives with a section on geography. A widely read example from the late antique period is Orosius's: *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*.<sup>1</sup> Other examples of this approach include Gildas's sixth-century description of the geography of Britain in *The Ruin of Britain*.<sup>2</sup> Two centuries later Bede starts his *Ecclesiastical History* with an account of the geography of Britain and Ireland.<sup>3</sup> Although there is a long tradition from classical to medieval times of works on geography or works which integrate geography and ethnography in their narratives, comparatively little relates specifically to Ireland, and even less to Sweden and Norway. Adam was the first to supply a longer ethno-geographical account of Sweden and Norway whilst Gerald's *Topography* was the first longer account on Ireland written by a non-Irish person.

Adam's and Gerald's geographical accounts are informed by their knowledge of ancient sources. Adam used a variety of classical and late antique sources like Pliny,

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<sup>1</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. paganos*. 1.1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Gildas, *De Excidio Britanniae* in *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, M. Winterbottom (ed. and tr.) 3.

<sup>3</sup> Bede: *HE*. 1.1.

Orosius, and Isidore of Seville, as well as medieval sources such as Charlemagne's biographer Einhard. The sources he cites most frequently on the geography of the region are Martianus Capella's *Marriage of Philology and Mercury* (fourth century AD) and also, to a lesser extent, Solinus' *'Collection of Curiosities'* (third century AD).<sup>4</sup> Martianus Capella's work was a regular text book in the context of medieval education, its geography section a mixture of information from Pliny's and Solinus' works, with smaller contributions from a host of other writers.<sup>5</sup> Adam backs up his narrative with the authority of the ancient sources: 'everything I am about to put down will be substantiated by sound authorities so that, if am not believed, credit at least may be accorded my source.'<sup>6</sup> Gerald, on the other hand, does not refer to ancient authorities, but claims to have collected all facts in the *Topography* himself. He tells the reader that he took note of the nature in Ireland, of strange, wondrous things, of the customs of the Irish, and, from his collected notes, he chose what he thought worthy of being remembered.<sup>7</sup> But Gerald cites Solinus, as well as Bede, and he would most likely have been familiar with the same ancient sources as Adam. As Boivin explains, he was one of the most educated clerics in a very cultured era.<sup>8</sup> Although he presents his work as something totally new, his depiction is influenced by the image of peripheral locations as portrayed in ancient narrative.

This chapter will demonstrate how Adam and Gerald place the locations they write about in an Oceanic context at what was thought to be the very limit of the world. It will argue that Adam, although aware that Sweden and Norway are situated on a peninsula, writes of these locations in the context of islands. Adam calls his fourth book, which deals mainly with Denmark, Norway and Sweden, 'A Description of the Islands of the North.' The idea of associating these places with islands in the Ocean is of vital importance to Adam; for him these islands are linked with the fulfilment of biblical prophecy and the salvation of mankind, an issue which will be discussed in the next chapter.

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<sup>4</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*; Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*; Solinus, *Collectanea*.

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion on Martianus Capella's sources see Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*, Vol I, 129-148, also footnote on page 129.

<sup>6</sup> *AB*, prologue.

<sup>7</sup> *Top.* dedication.

<sup>8</sup> 'Giraud de Barri fut en des clerics les plus cultivés d'un age très cultivé.' Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 47.

This chapter will explore the geographical world view of Adam and Gerald through the medium of ancient narratives and medieval maps: zonal maps, T/O maps—the schematic maps where the continents form a T-shape—and more detailed world maps. It will discuss ancient geographers in relation to Adam’s and Gerald’s depiction of their respective locations. Adam, as will be examined, is using ancient mythical names for real northern locations in his eagerness to align his geographical account with that of classical learning. In spite of the islands’ location in the northern Ocean, near what was thought of as the frozen zone, Adam and Gerald follow ancient narrative traditions, which portray islands in the Ocean as blessed and fertile. This chapter will argue that Adam chooses to depict Sweden as a classical *locus amoenus* (pleasant place), a beautiful location that for a Christian evokes ideas of paradise. Gerald does the same for Ireland. It will also investigate Adam’s and Gerald’s presentation of their respective locations as settings of the unexpected: wonders and marvels, freaks of nature and unusual wildlife, another ancient *topos* which emphasises that these remote islands in the Ocean are places apart from the rest of the world.

### **Adam, Gerald and the Islands in the Immense Ocean at the Physical Limit of the World**

In ancient times, as in the Middle Ages, the known world, the *orbis terrarum*, was believed to consist of one landmass surrounded by a vast Ocean.<sup>9</sup> It was a tripartite world; the land was divided into three continents: Europe, Africa and Asia. Whilst Europe was relatively well known, the full extent of Africa was unknown, only a narrow strip along the Mediterranean coast was familiar territory. The parts of Asia closest to Europe was known but far-away places like Sri Lanka and India, also placed on world maps, were more heard of or imagined than actually known. From a western perspective the core civilised cultures of the known world were situated around the Mediterranean. From this cultural and political centre the most remote inhabited places on earth were the islands in the Ocean that surrounded the terrestrial landmass.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> On the Medieval world view see Evelyn Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed their World* (London, 1997); Paul T. Keyser, ‘Greek Geography of the Western Barbarians,’ in Larissa Bonfante (ed.), *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe, Realities and Interactions* (Cambridge, 2011); Natalia Lozovsky, *The Earth is our Book: Geographical Knowledge in the Latin West ca. 400-1000* (Ann Arbor, 2000); A.H. Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2005); J.O. Thomson, *History of Ancient Geography* (Cambridge, 1948).

<sup>10</sup> James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton, 1992) 9-44.

Ireland, Sweden and Norway are seen by Adam and Gerald as such remote islands. In Book IV of his narrative, Adam describes an enormous geographical area, extending from Russia and the Nordic countries to Britain, Iceland, and Greenland. Although Gerald's narrative concentrates on Ireland, he also mentions other locations, for instance Britain, Spain, Norway and Iceland. All these places have a common context: they are in or near the great Ocean. Here Adam writes about the places in the Western Ocean, which to him is part of the Great Ocean that surrounds the world:

But the Western Ocean apparently is the one which the Romans in their writings called the British Ocean. It is of immense breadth, terrible and dangerous, and on the west encompasses Britain to which is now given the name England (*Occidentalis autem oceanus ille videtur, quem alluit Romani Britannicum scribunt, cuius latitudo immensa terribilis et periculosa complectitur ab occasu Britanniam, quae nunc Anglia dicitur*). On the south it touches the Frisians and the part of Saxony that belongs to our diocese of Hamburg. On the east there are the Danes and the mouth of the Baltic Sea and the Norwegians, who live beyond Denmark. On the north that ocean flows by the Orkney Islands and then encircles the earth in boundless expanses. On the left there is Hibernia, the fatherland of the Scots, now called Ireland. On the right there are the crags of Norway, and farther on the islands of Iceland and Greenland. There ends the Ocean called dark (*Ibi terminat oceanus, qui dicitur caligans*).<sup>11</sup>

This quotation demonstrates the interconnectedness of the places which Adam and Gerald describe: they are islands in the Ocean. Part of this Ocean was known as it had been conquered by the Romans. That Adam is aware of Roman history can be seen when he calls the Western Ocean the British Ocean, following Roman usage. The Romans regarded the conquest of Britain and the Orkney Islands as a triumph for their Empire.<sup>12</sup> Classical sources considered the Orkney Islands as farthest islands in the north-western Ocean. With the conquest of these islands the Roman Empire had reached the ends of the earth.<sup>13</sup> Only the mythical island of Thule was thought to be

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<sup>11</sup> AB IV, x.

<sup>12</sup> Scully, 'Proud Ocean has become a Servant,' 3-15:4-5.

<sup>13</sup> On the Orkney islands as a marker of north see Diarmuid Scully, 'The Third Voyage of Cormac in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*,' in Alistar Minnis and Jane Roberts, *Text, Image, Interpretation: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature and its Insular Context in Honour of Éamonn Ó Carragáin* (Cork, 2007) 209-232:214; Diarmuid Scully, 'Ends of the Empire and the Earth: Themes of Transition and the Orkney Islands from Antiquity to Bede,' in Jane Hawkes, Megan Boulton and Melissa Herman (eds.), *The Art, Literature and Material Culture of the Medieval World* (2015, Dublin).

more remote.<sup>14</sup> Adam supports these ideas when he tells us that Roman historians claim that Thule is the farthest island of all.<sup>15</sup> To Adam ‘this Thule is now called Iceland from the ice which binds the ocean.’<sup>16</sup>

The northernmost part of this Ocean, which Adam calls ‘dark,’ was unexplored in Adam’s time. Adam uses similar wording when writing about Vinland, another island in the Ocean, which King Svein has described to him: ‘beyond that island...no habitable land is found in that ocean, but every place beyond it is full of impenetrable ice and intense darkness.’<sup>17</sup> Likewise, an expedition of the Norwegian prince Harold relates that ‘after he had explored the expanse of the Northern Ocean in his ships, there lay before their eyes at length the darksome bounds of a failing world.’<sup>18</sup> The darkness of the Ocean can be seen as a factual depiction. It may also be a symbolic reference to there being no trace of human life beyond these last outposts of human habitations.

Gerald’s words on Ireland convey similar ideas of it being the farthest outpost in the western fringes of the world. It is a place apart, divided from the continent of Europe by a tempestuous Ocean. To him Ireland is:

the farthest western land...for beyond those limits there is no land, nor is there any habitation either of men or beasts—but beyond the whole horizon only the ocean flows and is borne on in boundless space through its unsearchable and hidden ways.<sup>19</sup>

The great Ocean that Adam and Gerald write about was a topic in many ancient narratives. It was seen as a great river surrounding the terrestrial landmass.<sup>20</sup> This image of the Ocean encircling the *terra firma* remains unchanged in classical and late antique sources. Isidore of Seville tells us that the Ocean is named so ‘because it goes around the globe in manner of a circle.’<sup>21</sup> It was unknown and associated with danger.

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<sup>14</sup> Scully, ‘Location and Occupation: Bede, Gildas and the Roman Vision of Britain,’ 243-272: 247. On the location of Thule: Monique Mund-Dopchie, *Ultima Thulé, Histoire d’un Lieu et Genèse d’un Mythe* (Geneva, 2009) 301f; a full list of ancient and early modern sources that mention Thule, 401-448.

<sup>15</sup> AB IV, xxxvi.

<sup>16</sup> AB IV, xxxvi.

<sup>17</sup> AB IV, xxxix. This is a first mention of the American continent in western writing.

<sup>18</sup> AB IV, xxxix.

<sup>19</sup> *Top.* prologue.

<sup>20</sup> Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 12-26. See for example Hesiod who described Ocean as a huge river that encircled the world, an offspring of a union between Heaven and Earth. Hesiod, *Theogony*, H.G. Evelyn-White (tr.) LCL (Cambridge, MA., 1914) 116-138.

<sup>21</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIII. xv.1.

Only the Mediterranean was familiar to Greek sailors. The Ocean that was located in the far distance, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, today's Rock of Gibraltar, was seen as hostile and intimidating.<sup>22</sup> When Adam and Gerald write about the Ocean as boundless and forbidding they follow this classical *topos*.<sup>23</sup> The Northern Ocean in particular is filled with danger, whirlpools, *maelstroms* that suck nearby ships into its centrifugal force and pull them to the bottom of the sea.<sup>24</sup>

For Gerald and Adam, as for medieval geographers, these islands in the Ocean were regarded as places apart. The tripartite inhabited landmass was the *orbis terrarum*. Separated from the *orbis terrarum* were the islands in the Ocean, which were regarded as an *alter orbis*, often with different characteristics from the terrestrial landmass, as we will see later in this chapter.<sup>25</sup> Solinus highlights the isolation of Ireland; it can only be reached from Britain in exceptional conditions on account of the stormy seas.<sup>26</sup> He speaks of Britain, and the islands further away from Gaul, as another world (*nomen paene orbis alterius mereretur*).<sup>27</sup> Late antique sources put emphasis on the oceanic isles as an *alter orbis*.<sup>28</sup> Isidore of Seville writes of the Britons that 'their nation is situated within the Ocean, with the sea flowing between us and them, as if they were outside our orbit (*gens intra Oceanum interfuso mari quasi extra orbem posita*).'<sup>29</sup> Adam and Gerald follow their precepts: Adam speaks of the land beyond the Danes as another world (*transeuntibus insulas Danorum alter mundus aperitur in Sueoniam vel Nortmanniam*), whilst Gerald refers to the Irish as if inhabiting 'another world (*tanquem in orbe quodam altero*).'<sup>30</sup> Thus, although these are inhabited regions, they are not part of the *ecumene* but seen as places apart from the rest of the world.

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<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Pindar, *The Odes of Pindar*, John Sandys (tr.) Olympian, 3. 42. On the Pillars of Hercules, see Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 17-19.

<sup>23</sup> Classical references regarding the Northern Ocean in Scully, 'The Third Voyage of Cormac in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*,' 209-230:211:214.

<sup>24</sup> AB IV, xL; *Top.* 47.

<sup>25</sup> Diarmuid Scully, 'Augustus, Rome, Britain and Ireland on the Hereford *mappa mundi*: Imperium and Salvation,' *Peregrination, Journal of Medieval Art and Architecture* 4, no. 1 (2013) 107-133:123; Patrick Gautier Dalché, 'Comment penser l'Océan? Modes de connaissance des *fines orbis terrarum* du Nord-Ouest (de l'Antiquité au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle),' in Michel Balard (ed.), *L'Europe et L'Océan au Moyen Age: contribution à l'histoire de la navigation*, (Nantes, 1988) 217-228:219.

<sup>26</sup> Solinus, *Collectanea*, 22.2-6; Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 87.

<sup>27</sup> Solinus, *Collectanea*, 22:1.

<sup>28</sup> Scully, 'The Third Voyage of Cormac in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*,' 209-230:213.

<sup>29</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, IX. ii.101.

<sup>30</sup> AB IV, xxi; *Top.* 93. In the *Conquest of Ireland* he also refers to Britain as another world: Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.26.



When Adam discusses the Ocean and the places within it, he also impresses on the reader the sheer extent of the mission of Hamburg-Bremen, as many of the places mentioned are under the sway of the bishopric. His interest in the vast regions he depicts lies in their potential for conversion by his diocese. Legates come from distant locations to entreat the archbishop to send them preachers. According to Adam ‘the Icelanders and Greenlanders and the legates of the Goths and the Orkney Islands came farthest.’<sup>31</sup> It is interesting to note that the Goths, who play a key role in Adam’s narrative, are seen as remote as the inhabitants of Greenland, an island as far away as Thule.<sup>32</sup> The Goths, living in the central parts of Sweden, are a comparatively short distance away from Adam’s Hamburg, yet Adam presents them as if located at the very limit of the world. For Adam this is important: Hamburg-Bremen sends bishops to the furthestmost places on earth. Thus they are converting peoples at the very limit of the world, the last possible human habitations, which has implications for biblical prophecy. The way in which Adam represents Sweden and Norway geographically in the context of islands is vitally important as the idea of islands in the Ocean brings with it powerful associations of Christian salvation, an issue discussed in the next chapter.

In ancient narrative Sweden, called Scandza, was portrayed as an island. When speculating on nameless islands in the Northern Sea, Pliny speaks of Scatania in a place he calls the Codanian Gulf.<sup>33</sup> Ptolemy, the second-century geographer, gives the name Scandia to a small lozenge shaped island off the northern coast of Germany.<sup>34</sup> In the sixth century, Jordanes, who wrote a history of the Goths, a people that saw Scandza as their homeland, refers to the location as an island.<sup>35</sup> By Adam’s time Sweden and Norway were known as a peninsula, and from this time they are also depicted as such on the maps.<sup>36</sup> It is difficult to get a clear picture of how Adam visualises the map of Norway and Sweden. He tells us that Norway and Sweden are

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<sup>31</sup> AB III, Lxxiii.

<sup>32</sup> AB IV, x.

<sup>33</sup> Pliny, *NH.* 4.27.

<sup>34</sup> Claudius Ptolemy, *The Geography*, Edward Luther Stevenson (tr. and ed.) (New York, 1932; reprint New York, 1991).

<sup>35</sup> Jordanes, *Getica, The Origins and Deeds of the Goths*, Charles C. Mierow (tr.) (Princeton, 1908), geographical intro III. On Scandza in Jordanes see Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity*, 142-155.

<sup>36</sup> Leonid S. Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography: Inventory, Texts, Translation, and Commentary* (Turnhout, 2006), Hereford map, Ref X.12, text p.161, plate p. 467; Sawley map, Ref. X.7, text p. 137, plate p. 454.

‘shut in by exceedingly high mountains—higher ones, however, in Norway which encircles Sweden with its alps.’<sup>37</sup> ‘Beyond Norway, which is the farthestmost northern country, you will find no human habitation, nothing but ocean, terrible to look at and limitless, encircling the whole world.’<sup>38</sup> The depiction here, with the Ocean encircling the north of Norway, points to an island status for Norway and Sweden. However, Adam also tells us that ‘those who have knowledge of geography also assert that some men have passed by an overland route from Sweden into Greece,’ a deed that certainly would have been impossible from an island.<sup>39</sup> The Cotton Map, dated c. 1025-1050, and thus contemporary with Adam, is the earliest surviving map that shows Scandinavia as a peninsula.<sup>40</sup> The peninsula carries the inscription *Neronorroen*, which has been interpreted as Norway.<sup>41</sup> This map is unusual in its square shape, its emphasis on boundaries in Africa and Asia, as well as the shape of Britain. Scholars suggests it may have Roman origins, yet it is also linked with later *mappae mundi*.<sup>42</sup> In spite of being unusual it illustrates many of the characteristics of the classical and medieval world view which is shared by Adam and Gerald: the extensive landmass, the central position of the Mediterranean surrounded by the islands in the Ocean. On the map Norway and Sweden are attached to the mainland. As Chekin explains, this new picture was the result of ‘practical experience and oral reports.’<sup>43</sup> One of these practical experiences was the Norwegian Ohthere’s voyage, which is described in *King Alfred’s Orosius*.<sup>44</sup> The implication of Adam choosing to depict this northern region as an island is discussed in the next chapter.

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<sup>37</sup> AB IV, xxi.

<sup>38</sup> AB, IV, xxxv.

<sup>39</sup> AB IV, xv.

<sup>40</sup> Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, 129.

<sup>41</sup> Patrick McGurk, ‘The Mappa Mundi,’ in *An Eleventh- Century Anglo-Saxon Illustrated Miscellany: British Library Cotton B.V. Part I, together with leaves from the British Library Cotton Nero D. II, P*, McGurk, D.N. Dumville, M.R. Godden and A. Knock (eds.) (Copenhagen, 1983) 79-86.

81. Date on p. 33.

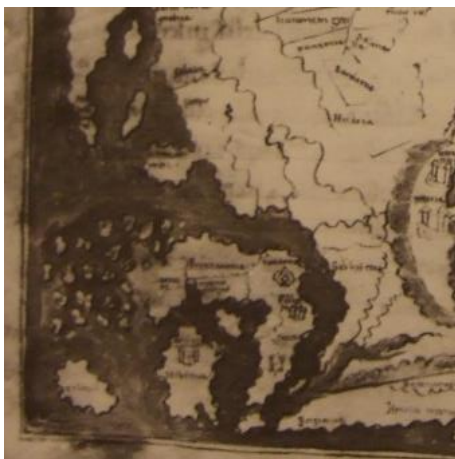
<sup>42</sup> McGurk, (ed.), ‘*The Mappa Mundi*,’ 79-86; Alfred Hiatt, ‘From Hulle to Cartage: Maps, England, and the Sea,’ in Sobecki, Sebastian I. (ed.), *The Sea and Englishness in the Middle Ages: Maritime Narratives: Identity and Culture* (Cambridge; Rochester N.Y., 2011) 133-157:134. See also Mittman and Kim, *Inconceivable Beasts: The Wonders of the East in the Beowulf Manuscript*, 187.

<sup>43</sup> Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, 25. See also Leonid S. Chekin, ‘*Mappae Mundi* and Scandinavia,’ *Scandinavian Studies* 65, no. 4 (1993) 487-516:487.

<sup>44</sup> Ohthere and Wulfstan, *Tollemache Orosius* (MS BL Additional, 47967): *The Old English Orosius*, Janet Bately (ed.), The Early English Text Society (Supplementary Series 6) (London, 1981).



London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius. B,V, pt. 1, fol. 56 v, in Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, Ref. X.2, p. 448.



Detail from the map above showing Britain and Ireland. The Orkney Islands are scattered to north-west of Britain. Scandinavia appears as a circular shaped peninsula on a narrow neck marked with the name Neronoroen (Norway) above Britain. The long island further north is Iceland. In the left corner of the map is 'Tylen,' Thule.

## Adam, Gerald and the Zonal Maps of the Planet

Maps of the planet showing climate zones are vital for an understanding of Adam's and Gerald's world view as they demonstrate how the planet was perceived in ancient and medieval times. The zonal maps show continents in the southern hemisphere, but, to a medieval Christian there is no possibility of these lands being inhabited by humans. These maps further emphasise that the islands in the Northern Ocean are the last inhabited places on earth. In the Middle Ages educated opinion saw the world as round or sphere-shaped.<sup>45</sup> Adam makes it clear that he knows the shape of the earth when he speaks of the 'rotundity of the earth.'<sup>46</sup> This view had been formed as early as 400 BC, the 'Golden Age' of Greek culture.<sup>47</sup> Ancient geographical ideas divided earth into climatic zones. Strabo explained these ideas in the first century AD.<sup>48</sup> The maps which divided the earth into zones are called Macrobian, as they are principally derived from manuscripts of Macrobius' *Commentary on the Dream Sequence of Scipio* (fifth century AD), in which the protagonists are taken high above the earth and are thus given a bird's-eye view of the planet.<sup>49</sup> Macrobian maps became the basis for the medieval maps dividing the world in zones according to climate.



From a south German MS of Macrobius' *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, c 1000. Bodleian Library, MS D'Orville 77, fol. 100r. On the above map one circular island is shown in the Western Ocean, representing *Orcades*, the Orkney Islands, regarded as the farthest of the islands in the Northern Ocean.

<sup>45</sup> Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Inventing the Flat Earth: Columbus and Modern Historians* (New York, 1991).

<sup>46</sup> AB IV, xxxviii.

<sup>47</sup> For a full discussion on the issue: Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 9-44.

<sup>48</sup> Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, Horace Leonard Jones (tr.) LCL (Cambridge, MA., 1917-) 2.5.34.

<sup>49</sup> Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, William Harris Stahl (tr., intro., and notes) (New York, 1952 and 1966) 201-202.

On these zonal maps the north is aligned the way we are used to today, with the northern frozen zone, *frigida septentrionalis*, represented at the top of the globe. South of this is the northern temperate zone which is the only inhabited place.<sup>50</sup> It is the only zone which can sustain life; the frozen zone is too cold for human habitation and the hot zone further south, *perusta*, is also uninhabitable as everything shrivels up from the heat there. Sallust writes of regions parched by the heat of the sun beyond the land of the Ethiopians.<sup>51</sup> South of the torrid equatorial zone is the southern temperate belt, followed by the southern frozen zone.<sup>52</sup> The northern and southern frozen zones were too cold for human habitation, whereas the band around the equator was too hot to inhabit or even to travel through. Only the two zones between these extremes of heat and cold, one in the southern hemisphere and one in the northern, had the possibility of being inhabited. In the words of Martianus Capella, these two zones are ‘tempered by the exhalations of life-giving breezes, conductive to human and animal habitation.’<sup>53</sup> Adam places Sweden and Norway within the northern temperate zone, aware that they are the last northernmost locations which can sustain life. When Adam writes that Norway ‘extends into the farthest northern zone’ and tells us of the ‘immoderate cold’ in this nation, he has this division of the world into zones in mind and is aware of its location at the extremity of the earth.<sup>54</sup> He also speaks of the excessive cold in Iceland.<sup>55</sup> Gerald too is familiar with the climate zones. He speaks of the frigid zone in relation to an unusual well in Norway.<sup>56</sup>

From a medieval Christian perspective the entire population of the world lived within this temperate northern zone. As Christians believed all human life must be traced back to the Old Testament figure of Noah and his family, the sole survivors of the Flood, this was the only possible place for humans to inhabit.<sup>57</sup> After surviving the Flood, God had told Noah’s three sons, Ham, Shem and Japheth to go out and ‘be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth.’<sup>58</sup> They were each sent to different corners of the

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<sup>50</sup> Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*, 7.

<sup>51</sup> Sallust, *The War Against Jugurtha*, 19.6.

<sup>52</sup> On climatic zones: Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 128-30, 134-135; Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*, 6-7.

<sup>53</sup> Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*, 6. 602.

<sup>54</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

<sup>55</sup> AB, appendix.

<sup>56</sup> *Top.* 40. ‘*frigidam zonam*,’ *Topographia Hibernie*, 138.

<sup>57</sup> Genesis 7.

<sup>58</sup> Genesis 9:1.

earth. Medieval learning places Ham in Africa, Shem in Asia and Japheth in Europe, although descendants of Ham and Japheth can also be found in Asia.<sup>59</sup> Japheth is of special significance for Europe as his descendants divided between them ‘the islands of the Gentiles.’<sup>60</sup> For Adam ‘the island of the gentiles’ is Sweden and Norway, places that are of importance for the Christian mission. From a pagan perspective these islands represented the very limits of the physical world, from a Christian perspective they become core components of the ideal of the Christian universal Church. If, following Christ’s command, the aim of the Church was to spread salvation to all nations, then the conversion of these islands represented the fulfilment of that mission.<sup>61</sup>

In medieval Christian belief the northern islands in the Ocean were some of the few remaining locations to become part of the universal Church. They were aware of the landmass on the southern hemisphere but did not believe it to be inhabited. The parched zone near the equator was thought to be an impenetrable barrier as the heat would prevent access to the landmass. Although late-antique writers, like Martianus Capella, had speculated on the possibility of people inhabiting the southern temperate zone, this was unimaginable for a Christian.<sup>62</sup> Martianus Capella called these peoples *antecians*, to Augustine they are Antipodes.<sup>63</sup> To Augustine the idea of the Antipodes, ‘men who walk with their feet opposite ours,’ was not credible.<sup>64</sup> He dismissed this idea as mere scientific conjecture, not affirmed by historical knowledge. Augustine does not argue against the notion that the world is round or spherical, but to him it does not follow that there is land on the other side, and if there is, it does not mean that it is populated. For Augustine the thought that men would have taken ships and travelled to distant landmasses is absurd, as it is not documented by Scripture. Isidore of Seville concurs with Augustine: the Antipodes ‘are on no account to be believed in.’<sup>65</sup> By the Middle Ages the idea of the Antipodes was not a heretic concept, it was ‘neither

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<sup>59</sup> Japheth’s descendants in Asia: Bede, *On the Reckoning of Time*, Faith Wallis (tr.) (Liverpool, 1999) 164, cited by Scully, ‘Location and occupation: Bede, Gildas and the Roman vision of Britain,’ 243-272:245.

<sup>60</sup> Genesis 10:5. King James Bible says isles; modern translations simply say ‘lands.’

<sup>61</sup> Matthew 28:19.

<sup>62</sup> Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*, 6. 605.

<sup>63</sup> On the Antipodes see Alfred Hiatt, *Terra Incognita: Mapping the Antipodes before 1600* (London, 2008); Matthew Boyd Goldie, *The Idea of the Antipodes: Place, People and Voices* (New York, 2010); on the Antipodes in medieval geography see especially 36-70.

<sup>64</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 16. 9.

<sup>65</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, IX.ii.133.

studiously ignored nor rejected out of hand.’<sup>66</sup> In the twelfth century the possibility of a passage to the Antipodes seemed impossible but a shift in thinking occurred over the next two centuries, through the influence of Arabic text which claimed that the torrid zone was inhabitable, and through travel narratives, ‘genuine and confected.’<sup>67</sup> Thus medieval writers (in time) ‘came to believe more firmly that the Antipodes existed as a place.’<sup>68</sup>

### **Adam, Gerald and the Medieval World on T/O Maps and *Mappae Mundi***

The remoteness of Sweden, Norway and Ireland in the Middle Ages and earlier is equally evident when looking at what was then the known world as depicted on eleventh and twelfth-century world maps, T/O maps and world maps alike. The T/O maps show only the known territories of the planet. The terrestrial landmass of the known world (*orbis terrarum*) was represented as a circular shape to denote the rounded shape of the earth.<sup>69</sup> The circle was then divided into three continents, Europe, Africa and Asia. These three continents were surrounded by the Ocean, which was often schematically represented, as below with short lines between the two outer circles or with lines representing waves within the same space.<sup>70</sup> This was the entire inhabited world and it is portrayed in this schematic manner on numerous medieval maps.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Matthew Boyd Goldie, *The Idea of the Antipodes: Place, People and Voices* (New York, 2010) 50.

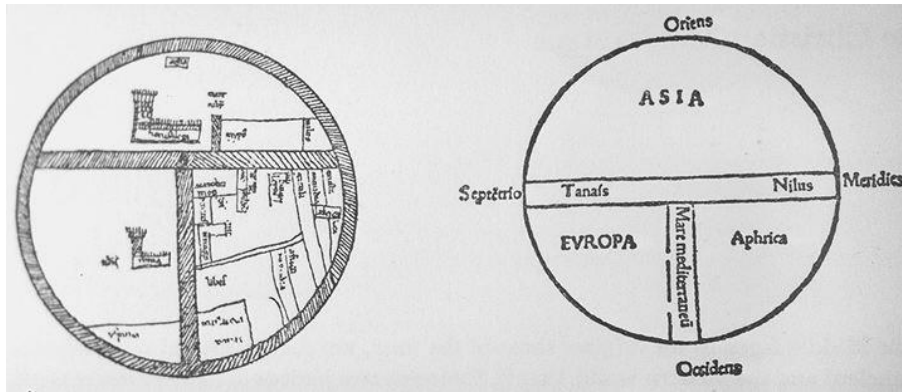
<sup>67</sup> Alfred Hiatt, *Terra Incognita: Mapping the Antipodes before 1600*, 96.

<sup>68</sup> Matthew Boyd Goldie, *The Idea of the Antipodes: Place, People and Voices* (New York, 2010) 36.

<sup>69</sup> T/O maps: Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, 38; Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*, 4-5.

<sup>70</sup> T/O maps in Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, 28f, 327f.

<sup>71</sup> Key maps appear in Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*. See also Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*; Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*.



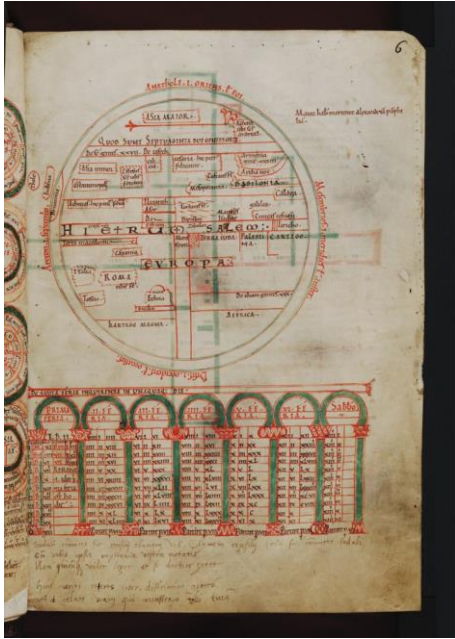
Left, T/O Map from twelfth- century Sallust MS in the Vatican Library. Right: copy of T/O map from Zacharias, *Orbis breviarum*, Florence, 1493. Map from Leo Bagrow and R.A Skelton, *History of Cartography* (New Brunswick, 2010) 42.

On the schematic maps the continents form a T-shape, hence the name T-map or T/O map for this category of maps. These types of maps were almost always orientated towards the east; thus we find Asia above the diameter and Africa below in the right quarter, whilst Europe is the left quarter. Between Europe and Africa is the Mediterranean, the other waters dividing continents are the rivers Tanais (Don) and the Nile, as seen in the figure above. Beyond the *terra firma*, near the edge of the circular boundary of the map, we find the islands of the Ocean. The schematic maps and the *mappae mundi*, the world maps, show the absolute division of these places from the rest of the world: they are ‘severed from the *orbis terrarum* by Ocean.’<sup>72</sup>

A map now in St John’s College, Oxford, clearly illustrates the ‘other world’ position of Britain between the inner and outer circles that represents the Ocean, whereas Ireland (*Hibernia*) is even further distant, outside the outer circle. Only mythical Thule is more remote outside the rim of the map.

<sup>72</sup> Scully, ‘Augustus, Rome, Britain and Ireland on the Hereford *mappa mundi*: Imperium and Salvation,’ 107-133:123.





T/O Map from a calendar from Thorney Abbey, Cambridgeshire (c 1110), St John's College, Oxford, MS 17, 6r. Detail on the right. In Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, ref. III.2.2, text p. 64-65, plate p. 365.

The T/O maps are the most common medieval maps.<sup>73</sup> Originally the T/O maps seem to have been developed as illustrations for Sallust's *Jugurthine Wars*, a narrative which had a great influence on Adam's text and on his depiction of his archbishop, as discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>74</sup> One of the maps on the previous page illustrates this narrative. On the map we find detailed information on Africa, where the wars take place, but we also see Jerusalem as a castle near the centre of the map in the Asian section. In the Middle Ages the T/O map had a Christian context. The T-shape within the circle immediately brings to mind the symbol of the cross and was interpreted as such from an early period.<sup>75</sup> A Christian symbol embracing or encircling the entire world would evoke thoughts of salvation of mankind.<sup>76</sup> This is also a message on the medieval *mappae mundi*.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*, 4.

<sup>74</sup> John B. Friedman, 'Cultural Conflicts in Medieval World Maps,' in Stuart B. Schwartz, (ed.), *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, 1994) 64-95:70.

<sup>75</sup> Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*, 5 mentions wall paintings in France from the mid-ninth century.

<sup>76</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford paradigm*, 64f.

<sup>77</sup> Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, 43, 45-46.

Although the more comprehensive *mappae mundi* from the Middle Ages contain much information from ancient narrative, they are Christian maps with a Christian context. *Mappae mundi* from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries follow the same schematic outline as the T/O-maps but are more detailed. The prime examples of these medieval *mappae mundi* are the Hereford map (c. 1290) and Ebstorf map (thirteenth century).<sup>78</sup> On these maps Jerusalem takes the central position. It is from this point that the missions go out to the ends of the earth, an issue of uttermost importance for all Christians. Adam and Gerald are well aware of the locations of Sweden, Norway and Ireland in relation to the centre of the world, Jerusalem. This is evident from them referring to their respective locations as being on the limit of the world. Gerald clearly applies this thought when he speaks of his own world as ‘this furthest corner of the world,’ when the plight of the Holy City has been ignored by ‘the central part of the world.’<sup>79</sup>

Not only is Jerusalem given the prime central position on these maps, but on the Ebstorf map the head of Christ is superimposed at the extreme east, with his hands and feet displayed at cardinal directions, symbolising that the entire world is the body of Christ. This image reinforces the idea of mission spreading to all nations of the earth. The symbol of the body of Christ as the world is a reference to the words of St Paul: ‘So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another’ (Romans 12: 5). We see similar symbolism on other world maps of this time. At the top of the Hereford map, Christ is represented enthroned, displaying the wounds of his crucifixion, and descending from the clouds as the supreme ruler in the Last Judgement.<sup>80</sup> Christ here is surrounded by angels. Two of these proclaim the Last Judgement: the angel on the right with the message ‘rise, you will come to perpetual bliss’ whilst the angel on the left has a legend which reads ‘rise and depart to hellfire prepared.’<sup>81</sup> Angels played a prominent role in an eschatological and apocalyptic context, as heralds of the events to come. The Psalter map from 1265 shows Christ

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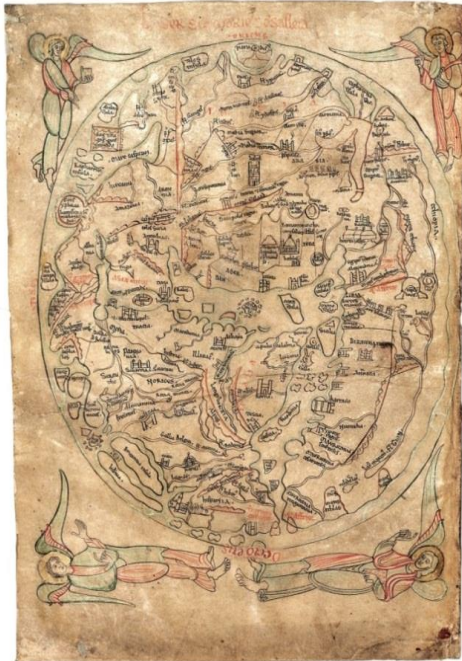
<sup>78</sup>The Ebstorf map: Kugler, Hartmut, Glauch, Sonja and Willing, Antje (eds.), *Die Ebstorfer Weltkarte* (Berlin, 2007). The Hereford map: Scott D. Westrem, *The Hereford Map: A Transcription and Translation of the Legends with Commentary* (Turnhout, 2000); Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford paradigm*.

<sup>79</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 2.26.

<sup>80</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford paradigm*, 64f.

<sup>81</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford paradigm*, 51, 65.

with angels presiding over the world.<sup>82</sup> On the Sawley map, illustrated below, angels are placed in the corners, pointing towards the earth as a reminder that time is finite, and the judgement will come.



The Sawley Map, from *Imago mundi* by Honorius Augustodunensis, c 1190, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 66.

The Sawley map is similar in its outline to the more detailed Hereford map. On this, as the other world maps, we find the three continents surrounded by the Ocean which is represented in a circle around the world. In this ocean are a few scattered islands, remote and far from the central landmasses of the world. Ireland, as far west as one can possibly go, as Gerald also told us, is shown on the rim of the map. It is the long kidney-shape in the left hand corner. Above this long shape is a circular island encircled by a lot of little satellites. These represent the Orkney Islands, the most remote northern isles of the western Ocean, as discussed earlier. According to ancient writers they were of uttermost importance as they marked the northernmost point of the British Isles and thus were seen as the islands farthest out in the Ocean, the very last location of human habitation.<sup>83</sup> In his depiction of the various locations in or

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<sup>82</sup> *Mapa Mundi* in 'The Map Psalter,' British Library, Additional MS 28681, folio 9. In Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, ref. X.9.1. text p. 140-141, plate p. 455. For several more examples see Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 67-73.

<sup>83</sup> Scully, 'Location and Occupation: Bede, Gildas and the Roman Vision of Britain,' 243-272: 247; Scully, 'The Third Voyage of Cormac in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*,' 209-232:214.

bordering the Ocean, Adam mentions the Orkney Islands and other islands in the Ocean which are ‘not to be overlooked because they also belong to the diocese of Hamburg.’<sup>84</sup> Adalbert’s planned journey to the north—which never took place—was to cross from Norway to the Orkney Islands and further to Iceland.<sup>85</sup> This is again a reinforcement of Adam’s view that his bishopric is involved in converting people at the very limit of the world. The map above reinforces the image of absolute remoteness of these locations in relation to the centre of the world, Jerusalem.

### **The National Library MS 700 Map, or ‘Gerald’s Map’**

It would be amiss not to mention the folio containing a map that is inserted between the *Topography* and the *Conquest of Ireland* in the Dublin 700 MS.<sup>86</sup> Unlike the previous maps discussed, this map shows only part of Europe, mainly the Latin West. O’Loughlin argues that it does not appear to have any direct relevance to the text of the *Topography*, but it has been suggested that it was either created by Gerald or made under his direction.<sup>87</sup> If it indeed is Gerald’s ‘own’ map, it must be of interest as it shows what is important to him, thus serves as a commentary for his two works on Ireland. For example, the British Isles are very prominent at the centre of the lower side of the map, mirrored by Rome, the most prominent city on the map, at the centre top. According to O’Loughlin this is a map of Britain in relation to Rome. He suggests, very plausibly, that it may reflect the route (or routes) taken by Gerald on his travels to Rome: how a journey to Rome is perceived at this time.<sup>88</sup> Mittman also discusses the centrality of Britain’s positions on the map.<sup>89</sup> Lavezzo speaks of the prominence of England on the map as an imperial centre to rival Rome, but also as ‘the conduit through which Roman spirituality flows to Ireland.’<sup>90</sup> She notes the isolation, and remoteness of Ireland in relation to Rome. Although the Ocean is indeed on the western side of Ireland, both England, Ireland and the Orkneys are nestled, or sheltered, between the prominent peninsulas of Norway to the north, and Spain in the

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<sup>84</sup> AB IV, xxxv.

<sup>85</sup> AB III, Lxxii. Legates from Orkney Islands, Iceland and Greenland in Bremen, see AB III, xxiv.

<sup>86</sup> Two other *Topography* MS, BL Arundel MS 14 and BL Additional MS 33991, also has versions of a similar map, although these only show the British Isles, Ireland and the Orkney Islands. See Mittman, ‘The Other Close at Hand: Gerald of Wales and the ‘Marvels of the West,’’ 97-112:106.

<sup>87</sup> O’Loughlin, ‘An Early Thirteenth Century Map in Dublin,’ 24-39.

<sup>88</sup> O’Loughlin, ‘An Early Thirteenth Century Map in Dublin,’ 24-39:39.

<sup>89</sup> Mittman, ‘The Other Close at Hand: Gerald of Wales and the ‘Marvels of the West,’’ 97-112:106.

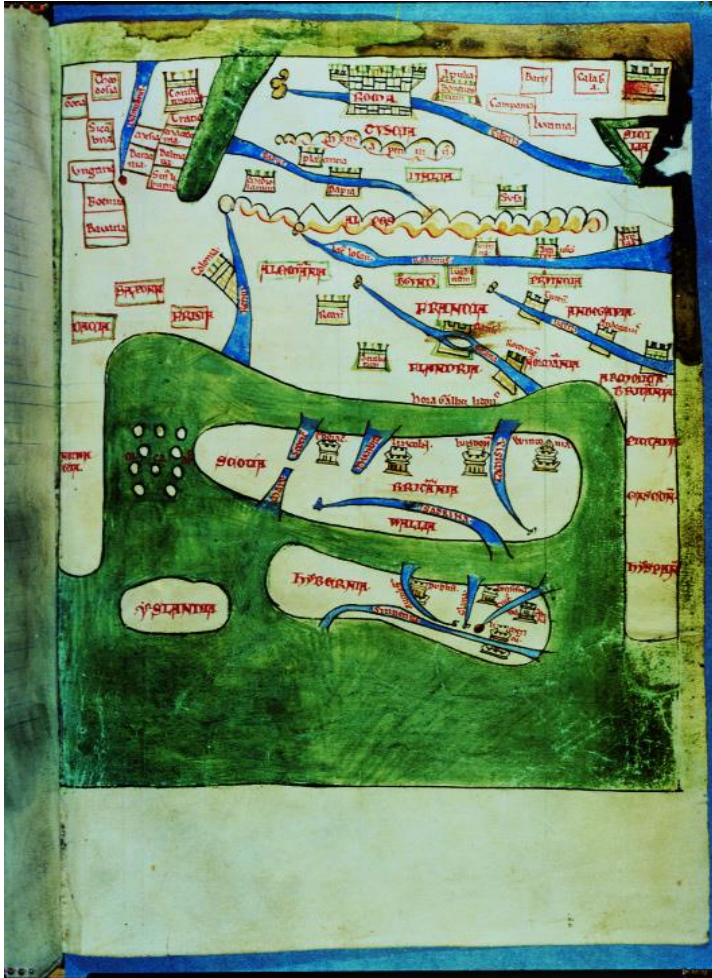
<sup>90</sup> Kathy Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature and English Community, 1000-1534* (New York, 2006) 68.

south, 'ready to hug or to wrestle,' according to Lavezzo.<sup>91</sup> However, the close 'embrace' of the territories of Europe makes the location seem a lot less exposed or remote. The fact that these southern and northern arms are less detailed, almost marginalised, contributes to the centrality and importance of England. The map seems to be a coloured sketch; it is not trying to be an accurate copy of any of the known world maps from this time. The prominence of Britain and Ireland, of places Gerald is familiar with renders it personal; it is an image of Gerald's preoccupations: reform and colonisation. Ireland is remote, but not so remote that it is beyond possibility of civilisation: it has cities. The map promotes the Angevin Empire; its territories are named on the map.<sup>92</sup> Rome, the centre of Christianity (standing in for Jerusalem) is the focal point, the second largest city, Paris, is the city where Gerald studied, an important city of learning. The place-names on the map appear more frequent in places that we know Gerald has visited (France and Italy) or are well-known enough that Gerald would be familiar with them (Cologne). Thus it also appears as a personal travel document.

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<sup>91</sup> Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 68.

<sup>92</sup> Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 69.



Map of Europe in *National Library*, Dublin MS 700, 48r

### Adam and Classical and Medieval Representations of the Northern Region: Evil or Blessed Locations

Because of the remoteness of their location in the Northern Ocean, the northern fringes of the world remained shrouded in myth. There is very little specific information on Sweden or Norway in ancient narratives.<sup>93</sup> North had the potential of being described as either evil or, less often, pleasant. Consequently Adam had choices about how to portray the northern region. In classical as well as Christian times the very word ‘north’ was intimidating, inspiring unpleasantness or fear. The words describing geographical north are those of winds: *boreas*, the Greek name, and *aquilo*, the Latin equivalent.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Nansen has a thorough discussion on possible references to Sweden and Norway in antique sources. Fridtjof Nansen, *In Northern Mists, Arctic Exploration in Early Times*, Vol. 1 (New York, 1911) 7-42.

<sup>94</sup> Pliny, *NH*. 2.46.



Both *boreas* and *aquilo* evoke an image of the icy-cold north wind. Fraesdorff argues that the term *aquilo* in particular, brings forth associations of the north as an evil place of the devil and of remote icy wastes.<sup>95</sup> This image is aided by the representation of the north in the Old Testament, where the Lucifer, the devil, has his throne in the North.<sup>96</sup> In the books of the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel the north is linked with disaster and warlike peoples bent on destruction.<sup>97</sup> A third name denoting north is *septentrio* or *septemtrio*, which refers to the *septem triones*, a constellation of stars.<sup>98</sup> Papal letters in the ninth century use both *aquilo* and *septentrio*.<sup>99</sup>

Adam uses all three designations but more commonly *boreas* or *septentrio*.<sup>100</sup> This may indicate that he does not wish to taint the north with the word that carries a strong association of evil, although he uses *aquilo* in the title of Book IV. Adam's Norway fits the depiction of the cold: he describes it as immoderately cold and with rough mountains.<sup>101</sup> Adam's Norway is a 'desert,' a barren place. In his portrayal this barren landscape is linked with the patriarchs of the Bible, a positive image, as will be explained in the next chapter.

However, a few classical authors mention Sweden. Adam is throughout his narrative eager to display his knowledge of ancient geography and to connect this sparse knowledge with Sweden and Norway. The earliest known traveller in the northern Ocean was Pytheas, from Massalia (Marseille) who made a journey to Britain in the fourth century BC.<sup>102</sup> Adam mentions Pytheas in relation to the shortness of the night of the Nordic summers.<sup>103</sup> We have already mentioned Pliny and Ptolemy, who speak of Scandia as an island. Orosius did not mention this Scandia, but he writes of the

<sup>95</sup> David Fraesdorff, 'The Power of Imagination: The Christianitas and the Pagan North During the Conversion to Christianity (800-1200),' *The Medieval Historical Journal* 5, no. 2 (2002) 309-332:310.

<sup>96</sup> Isaiah 14:12.

<sup>97</sup> See for example, Jeremiah 1.14, Ezekiel 38.15.

<sup>98</sup> *Septemtriones* is also known as *Ursa Major* (the Big Bear, another symbol of the north).

<sup>99</sup> Pope Paschal I's letter to Ebo, written sometime between 817 and 824 speaks of *gentis septentrionales* and *partibus aquilones* (SDHK 142). Other papal letters using *septentrio* when depicting the north and north-east: Gregory IV confirming Ansgar's appointment in 835 (SDHK 145); Pope Sergius II, regarding the mission of Hamburg-Bremen in 846 (SDHK 148); Pope Leo IV on the mission of Hamburg-Bremen in 849 (SDHK 149); Pope Hadrian (Adrianus) II confirming Rimbert's appointment in 872 (SDHK 152).

<sup>100</sup> See Luca Cardinali, *Adam Bremensis, Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum: concordantiae et indices*, conscripserunt Luca Cardinali et Maria Paola Segoloni, 2 Vols. (Hildesheim, New-York, 2009), *Aquilo*, Vol. 1, 78; *Septentrio*, Vol 2, 736; *Boreas*, Vol. 1, 107.

<sup>101</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

<sup>102</sup> His work is no longer extant, but appears briefly in the works of later geographers, for example Strabo, *Geography*, 1.4.3; 7.3.1.1.

<sup>103</sup> AB III, xxxvi.

Rhiphaean Mountains as markers of the end of Europe.<sup>104</sup> The Rhiphaean Mountains were by ancient geographers generally perceived to be situated to the east or northeast of the core civilisations of Greece and Rome. To Solinus this ‘very savage’ mountain range is in Germany.<sup>105</sup> Adam equates these mythical mountains with the Scandes (Skanderna), the mountain chain that divides Norway and Sweden.<sup>106</sup> Similarly he connects the Baltic Sea, an inlet from the great Ocean, to the ancient geographical names of the Barbarian Sea, Maeotic or Scythian lake.<sup>107</sup> These names, like the Rhiphaean Mountains, were not static, but shifted locations within the periphery.<sup>108</sup> The names evoke strangeness and unexplored regions inhabited by barbarians. Adam reinforces this image with information from his source Martianus Capella: the edge of this sea was ‘full of a multifarious diversity of barbarians.’<sup>109</sup> Thus, in his eagerness to connect the northern region with ancient learning, he creates an image of barbarity. However, this image of barbarity is contrary to the way he describes Sweden and its people as we will see in the next chapter.

In his anxiety to connect Sweden with the classical sources, Adam displays a confused rendering of ancient geography:

about Sweden, too, the ancient writers, Solinus and Oroisus are not silent. They say that the Swedes hold a very large part of Germany, and besides, that their highland regions extend up to the Rhiphaean Mountians. There, also, is the Elbe river to which Lucan appears to have referred. It rises in the alps before mentioned and courses through the midst of the Gothic peoples into the ocean; hence it is also called the Götaälv.<sup>110</sup>

The equating Göta Älv with Elbe (Albus) may have been simply a misreading. The impossibility of Göta Älv (an actual river in Sweden) running from the Rhiphaean mountains into Germany is obvious—the Ocean lies between Sweden and Germany. As for the Swedes holding a large part of Germany, this must be a misreading of Orosius, who mentions the Suebi, a German people, as possessing the largest part of

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<sup>104</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos*, 1.2.

<sup>105</sup> Solinus, *Collectanea*, 20.1.

<sup>106</sup> Adam writes of the Rhiphaean Mountains in *AB* IV, xxi, xxv; xxxi.

<sup>107</sup> *AB* IV, x. Adam’s geographical depiction of Sweden in detail: Söndergård, ‘At the Edge of the World: Early Medieval Ideas of the Nordic Countries,’ 51-71:56f.

<sup>108</sup> Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, 23.

<sup>109</sup> *AB* IV, xx. Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*, 6.665.

<sup>110</sup> *AB* IV, xxi.



Germania.<sup>111</sup> Solinus does not mention this people. Thus Adam demonstrates an awareness of ancient sources which he eagerly tries to fit into his own knowledge.

The two early medieval writers that mention Sweden (Scandza) in any detail regard the place as cold and unfruitful.<sup>112</sup> Jordanes tells us bee-keeping is impossible on account of the severe cold there.<sup>113</sup> It was a barren place, yet for Jordanes Scandza is the womb of nations, the *vagina nationum*.<sup>114</sup> It is from here that the Goths originated. The eighth-century monk and historian Paul the Deacon wrote of the Langobards, another people who traced their descent to Scandza. For him Scandza is removed from the heat of the sun and it is therefore cold and frosty, but he praises this climate as healthier than that of the south: in fact the further south you go the more sickness and ill-health there is.<sup>115</sup> He describes Scandza as a completely flat landscape, surrounded by coastal streams.<sup>116</sup> Adam does not mention either Paul the Deacon or Jordanes in his text, but two scholia, considered by scholars to have been written by Adam, mention Paul the Deacon and his work. As Paul the Deacon speaks of flat coastal streams, frost and cold, they clearly have not influenced Adam's depiction of Sweden.<sup>117</sup>

Unlike these classical and medieval sources on the northern region, Adam follows another ancient tradition which located a mythical people, the Hyperboreans, in the northernmost places on earth, in a location which is paradoxically described as blissful.<sup>118</sup> The word Hyperborean comes from *hyper boreas* which means 'beyond the north wind.'<sup>119</sup> According to Pliny, the Hyperboreans are living in forests and groves, warmed by the rays of the sun and sheltered from the icy blasts of the north wind.<sup>120</sup> Pomponius Mela places the Hyperboreans directly below the cardinal point of the polar

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<sup>111</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos*, 1.2. Isidore of Seville also mentions the Suevi, 'who holds the greater part of Germany.' Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.iv.3.

<sup>112</sup> For medieval depictions of the north, see Søndergaard, 'At the Edge of the World: Early Medieval Ideas of the Nordic Countries,' 51-71.

<sup>113</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, geographical intro. III.

<sup>114</sup> 'Quasi officina gentium aut certe velut vagina nationum.' Jordanes, *Getica*, IV. Mierow renders this as 'from a hive of races or a womb of nations.' See also Robert Rix, *The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination: Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature* (New York, 2015) 34.

<sup>115</sup> Paul the Deacon, *Langobardernas Historia*, Helge Weimark (tr.), Alvar Erikson (intro. and notes) (Uddevalla, 1971) I,1.

<sup>116</sup> Paul the Deacon, *Langobardernas Historia*, I,2.

<sup>117</sup> Schol.129 and 145 mention Paul and his history, or *gesta*, of the Lombards.

<sup>118</sup> AB IV, xii.

<sup>119</sup> Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 71.

<sup>120</sup> Pliny, *NH*. 4.26.

star.<sup>121</sup> Martianus Capella places the Hyperboreans near the mountains with the same name: ‘Behind those mountains and beyond the north wind are the Hyperboreans, in whose vicinity the axis of the world continually rotates.’<sup>122</sup> In recent times Romm explained that Hyperborea was ‘beyond the source of the cool rainy weather which descends on Greece during winter months...they inhabit a ‘pocket’ of climatic tranquillity.’<sup>123</sup> Adam labelling the Swedes as Hyperboreans clearly influences his geographical depiction of Sweden, which is seen as idyllic.

### **Adam’s Sweden and the Ancient *locus amoenus* (pleasant place) and Blessed Islands**

Getting to Sweden in Adam’s time is not easy because of the ‘densely wooded highlands and very rugged mountains over which the road from Scania into Götaland necessarily runs.’<sup>124</sup> However, when you get there a different image emerges. In his rather short description of Sweden Adam contradicts Jordanes’ view that in Sweden beekeeping is impossible because of the severe cold when tells us that the Swedish country is extremely fertile; ‘the land is rich in fruits and honey besides excelling all others in cattle raising, exceedingly happy in streams and woods.’<sup>125</sup> This short sentence captures all the necessary qualities of a classical *locus amoenus*, a Christian Garden of Eden, or Paradise.<sup>126</sup>

Isidore of Seville defines the expression *locus amoenus* by citing the Roman writer Varro (116-27 BC): ‘According to Varro pleasant places...are so called because they promote love (*amor*) only and draw to themselves things that ought to be loved.’<sup>127</sup> In ancient narrative these are far away islands or distant lands that are tranquil locations of beauty and fertility, well-watered with springs and streams.<sup>128</sup> These places have a

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<sup>121</sup> Pomponius Mela, *Pomponii Melae De chorographia libri tres*, Gunnar Ranstrand (ed.) (Gothenburg, 1971) 3.4.

<sup>122</sup> Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*, 6.664.

<sup>123</sup> Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 65.

<sup>124</sup> *AB* IV, vii.

<sup>125</sup> *AB* IV, xxi; Jordanes, *Getica*, geographical intro. III.

<sup>126</sup> Marek Tamm writes of thirteenth-century depictions of the not yet Christianised eastern Baltic as paradisiacal ‘Promised Land.’ Marek Tamm, ‘A New World into Old Worlds: The Eastern Baltic Region and the Cultural Geography of Medieval Europe,’ in Alan V. Murray (ed.) *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier* (Farnham, 2009) 11-35:20.

<sup>127</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.viii.33.

<sup>128</sup> Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (London, 1953) 183-202; Dagmar Thoss, *Studien Zum Locus Amoenus im Mittelalter* (Vienna, 1972). On the periphery as an earthly paradise: Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography*, 17.

health-giving climate; in pagan narrative they are often inhabited by people, gods or heroes who live in happiness and tranquillity without war and strife.<sup>129</sup> For example, Ethiopians are ‘blameless,’ the poetic epithet Homer gives them in the *Odyssey*, denoting religious purity.<sup>130</sup> They live in a perfect climate, with boundless fertility.<sup>131</sup> Some of these places are islands: Hesiod speaks of the Hesperides with their golden apples, a paradise location situated in the vast Ocean.<sup>132</sup>

In Christian tradition, the classical *locus amoenus* resembles the Garden of Eden or Paradise. The depiction of the Garden of Eden in the Bible is not extensive; we are told of trees, pleasant to view and good for food, the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and a flowing river which divides into four separate branches (Genesis 2:9-10). Depictions of the Garden of Eden invariably show these features.<sup>133</sup> Isidore of Seville tells us that ‘Every kind of fruit-tree and non-fruit bearing tree is found in this place, including the tree of life. It does not grow cold or hot there, but the air is always temperate.’<sup>134</sup> He also mentions a spring at its centre that irrigates the grove, which divides into four rivers.

These images of paradise merge with the classical *locus amoenus*. Islands in the Ocean continue to be treated as special places in Christian narratives. Isidore of Seville speaks of the Fortunate Isles in the Ocean which ‘produce all kinds of good things...blessed with an abundance of fruit,’ although Isidore points out that these islands are not paradise, a mistake made by pagans and worldly poets.<sup>135</sup> Jordanes too mentions the Blessed Isle and the Fortunate Isle in the Great Ocean, without describing them.<sup>136</sup> The early tenth-century account of St Brendan (483-577), who travelled on the Ocean, depicts islands which convey images of paradise.<sup>137</sup> St Brendan, who sailed north from

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<sup>129</sup> See for example: Hesiod *Theogony*, 211-225; Herodotus, *The Histories*, Aubrey de Sélincourt (tr.), John Marincola (revision with intro. and notes) (London 1954, revised 1972) 4.32-36. It will henceforth be written as *Histories*.

<sup>130</sup> Homer, *Odyssey* (ed. and tr.) A.T. Murray, revised by George E. Dimock (London and Cambridge, MA., 1995) I, 25-31.

<sup>131</sup> Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 51. A full discussion on the Ethiopians in Homer, 49-53.

<sup>132</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony*, 211-225.

<sup>133</sup> Alessandro Scafi, *Maps of Paradise* (London, 2013).

<sup>134</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.iii.2.

<sup>135</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi. 8.

<sup>136</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, geographical intro. I.

<sup>137</sup> St Brendan’s travels, based on an eighth-century legend, appear in manuscripts from the early tenth century onwards. Eileen Gardiner, *Medieval Visions of Heaven and Hell: A Sourcebook* (London, 1993) 51-52. Gardiner has a list of sources for the manuscript and its editions, 52f.

Ireland, encountered blissful islands of abundance but also ‘The Promised Land of the Saints,’ an island which appears as a vision of paradise.<sup>138</sup>

The island of St Brendan appears on the Hereford map with the inscription *fortunate insulaes ex sunt sct brandani*, in a location off the coast of Africa, where the islands we now call the Canary Islands are located.<sup>139</sup> However, a single manuscript leaf from the second half of the twelfth century contains the beginning of the story of Brendan’s voyage on one side and a schematic world map showing paradise on the other, thus synthesising Brendan’s island and Paradise. This map shows the climatic zones, with the inhabited world marked by a circle containing the words *aetiopes*, *riphei*, indicating north and south. What is quite unusual is paradise represented by a rectangle to the north, marked only by the four rivers, touching the orb yet outside it.<sup>140</sup> It is rare to place paradise towards the north. The Ebstorf map shows paradise beside the head of Christ, at the top of the map which is directed towards the east. Inscriptions tell us that Eden is the first region of Asia.<sup>141</sup> Likewise, the Hereford Map places paradise at the East, in this case just under the Last Judgement of Christ.<sup>142</sup> Gervase of Tilbury (1150-1228), who comments on Brendan’s voyage, tells us it is called ‘Islands of the Blessed by the philosophers, which we call the Elysian Field following poetic usage.’<sup>143</sup> Like Adam’s Sweden it is fertile and blissful. Gervase explains: ‘By its name it conveys that all good things are found there, and signifies that its inhabitants live in a state of happiness like that of paradise. The loveliness of the place and its richly-abundant fruitfulness ensure that it is greatly pleasing to all, and yet it is known only to a few.’<sup>144</sup> Like the Biblical account of Eden, Adam’s depiction of Sweden is brief and to the point—the reader understands this is an exceptional location. The fact that

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<sup>138</sup> Anonymous, *The Voyage of St Brendan: Representative Versions of the Legends in English Translation*, W.R.J. Barron and Glyn S. Burgess (eds.) (Exeter, 2002) xxvii.

<sup>139</sup> William H. Babcock, *Legendary Islands in the Atlantic: A Study in Medieval Geography* (New York, 1922) 39. For several additional maps with St Brendan’s isle see especially 38-39.

<sup>140</sup> Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*: Bischofszell, Thurgau, Ortsmuseum, Dr. Albert Knoepfli Stiftung, Kartographischer Dokumente, ref. V.6, p.83, map plate on p. 390; Scafi, *Maps of Paradise*, 84-85. Other maps that have Paradise located within a square or rectangle but not in the north, for example Higden’s *Polychronicon* (BL, Royal MS 14.C.9 f. 2 v.) and the Eversham world map (London, College of Arms, Muniment Room 18/19); see Scafi, *Maps of Paradise*, 57-59.

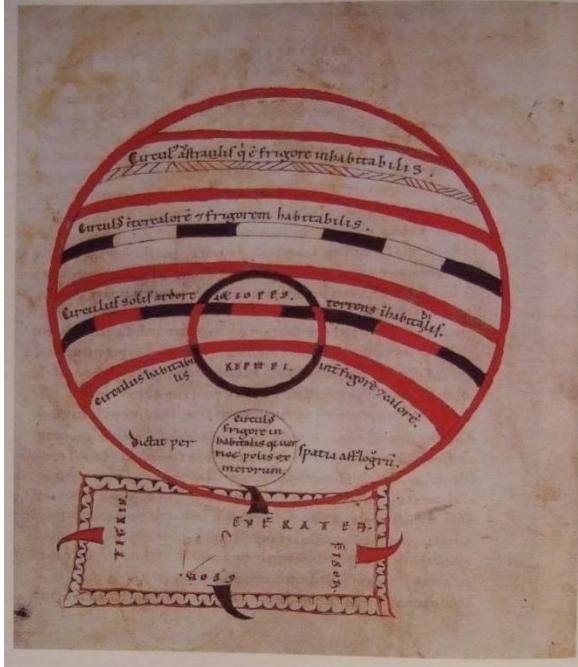
<sup>141</sup> Scafi, *Maps of Paradise*, 72.

<sup>142</sup> Scafi, *Maps of Paradise*, 64-65. On the location of Paradise see also Natalia Lozovsky, ‘Geography and Ethnography in Medieval Europe: Classical Traditions and Contemporary Concerns,’ in Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J. A. Talbert (eds.), *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies* (Malden, MA., 2010) 311-329:314-315.

<sup>143</sup> Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, S.E. Banks and J.W. Binns (tr. and ed.) (Oxford, 2002) 2.11 (p. 325).

<sup>144</sup> Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, 2.11 (p. 325).

he applies the name Hyperborean to the Swedes reinforces this image of tranquillity, of abundance and contentment.



Paradise located in the north in manuscript of St Brendan's travels, Dr. Albert Knoepfli Stiftung, Kartographischer Dokumente, Ortsmuseum Bischofszell, Thurgau, in Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography* ref. V.6, p.83, plate on p. 390. It shows paradise as a rectangle, touching the orb, yet outside it. The four rivers of paradise are marked and named.

### Gerald and Ireland: The Blissful Island of Abundance

Gerald also uses the *topos* of the *locus amoenus* to represent Ireland. In Ireland, Gerald tells us, 'the land is fruitful and rich in its fertile soil and plentiful harvests. Crops abound in the fields, flocks on the mountains, and wild animals in the woods.'<sup>145</sup> Gerald does not just paint a picture of a lush countryside but depicts Ireland as a place of perfection, an ideal location. He compares the climate of the east with that of the west and finds that the west, as represented by Ireland, is by far the best location. The east has silks, precious sparkling gems and aromatic spices, but it is also dangerous for

<sup>145</sup> *Top.* 2.

your health.<sup>146</sup> A chapter title in the *Topography* proclaims that ‘all the elements in the East are pestiferous.’<sup>147</sup> Gerald explains that although the elements were created to help humanity, in the East they ‘threaten his wretched life, deprive him of health and finally kill him.’<sup>148</sup> He lists the things that can cause death in the east: putting your bare foot on the ground, sitting on cold marble, drinking water unmixed with wine, the smell of dirty water, to uncover your head to the breeze, excessive heat and thunder. You expose yourself to these circumstances and ‘death is upon you.’<sup>149</sup> Added to all these dangers is the risk of being poisoned by members of your own family.<sup>150</sup> Ireland, on the other hand, is a gift from God, not yet appreciated: ‘the air is so healthy that there is no disease-bearing cloud, or pestilential vapour, or corrupting breeze.’<sup>151</sup>

To Gerald Ireland, ‘has a purity of an earlier age before ‘the world began to grow old,’ whilst in the rest of the world ‘the nature of almost all things become corrupt and changed for the worse.’<sup>152</sup> This purity of an earlier age reflects both pagan and biblical ideas. Seneca, for instance, writes ‘for there is no doubt that the world brought forth better things when it was not yet worn out.’<sup>153</sup> He expressed the idea that the world was better in a golden age when men had no property, enjoyed nature in common—before the world was corrupted by greed.<sup>154</sup> Gerald is familiar with Seneca, he cites him several times in *The Conquest of Ireland*. Gerald’s words also project the image of the beginning of history, when Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden.<sup>155</sup> Ireland is then, in Gerald’s estimation, akin to an earthly paradise: ‘the island is rich in pasture and meadows, honey and milk.’<sup>156</sup> Bede too, wrote about Ireland as a paradise: Ireland ‘abounds in milk and honey nor does it lack vines; fish, and birds.’<sup>157</sup> Gerald’s depiction of Ireland is similar to Bede’s, and extraordinary in its praise of Ireland, although depictions of Ireland tend to emphasise the mild climate and its fertile soil.

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<sup>146</sup> *Top.* 27.

<sup>147</sup> *Top.* 28. On Ireland in contrast to the east, see Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography*, 59-60.

<sup>148</sup> *Top.* 28.

<sup>149</sup> *Top.* 28.

<sup>150</sup> *Top.* 29.

<sup>151</sup> *Top.* 26.

<sup>152</sup> *Top.* 26.

<sup>153</sup> Seneca, *Moral Letters*, Richard M. Gummere (tr.), LCL (1917) Epistle 90. Latin original and translation in Arthur O Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (New York, 1965; first printed 1935) 264 f.

<sup>154</sup> Seneca, *Epistle* 90. See Lovejoy and Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, 264f.

<sup>155</sup> Genesis 2.

<sup>156</sup> *Top.* 2.

<sup>157</sup> Bede, *HE*.1.1.

In classical and late antique eras, Ireland was better known than the northern region of Europe. Ancient writers often discuss the Oceanic location and size of its islands.<sup>158</sup> This section will concentrate on the main sources that also discuss Ireland's climate and people. In classical depictions, Ireland is often represented as a fertile place with a mild climate. Tacitus (56AD-117AD) compares Ireland to Britain and finds that little differs; Britain is rainy but without severe cold, a place with good soil which in conjunction with the exceptional moisture produced abundant harvests, although olives and vine could not be grown there.<sup>159</sup> Orosius finds Ireland more useful than Britain 'because of its favourable climate and soil.'<sup>160</sup> Pomponius Mela and Solinus thought the island abundantly fertile and rich in vegetation.<sup>161</sup> Solinus tells us of a land so rich in fodder that the cattle would explode if not occasionally removed from the fields.<sup>162</sup> Strabo (64BC-24AD) contradicts this image, emphasising Ireland's location as northern, rather than western.<sup>163</sup> He considers Ireland 'a wretched place to live because of the cold, beyond which the lands are considered uninhabitable.'<sup>164</sup> He locates Ireland closer to Thule than other ancient writers; to him Ireland is only 'marginally habitable,' whilst regions further north, 'where Thule lies' are uninhabitable.<sup>165</sup> Gerald, like most of the ancient sources, depicts Ireland as abundantly fertile, but adds the aspect of a paradise on earth.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Scully, 'Ends of the Empire and the Earth,' (in press); Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 43-55.

<sup>159</sup> Tacitus, *The Agricola and the Germania*, H. Mattingly (tr.) (revised by S.A. Handford) (London, 1979). *The Agricola*, 12. Tacitus recounts that Britain was subjugated by the Romans, *Agricola*, 10. Juvenal also makes a brief mention of Iverna, and the Britons conquering the Orcades. Juvenal, *Satires*, G.G. Ramsay (tr.) LCL (1918) 2.149.

<sup>160</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos*, 1.2.

<sup>161</sup> Pomponius Mela, *De chorographia*, 3.6; Solinus, *Collectanea*, 22.2-6; Freeman (tr.) in Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 87.

<sup>162</sup> Solinus, *Collectanea*, 22.2-6; Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 87.

<sup>163</sup> Ireland as 'north:' Diarmuid Scully, 'At World's End; Scotland and Ireland in the Graeco-Roman Imagination,' in E. Longley, Eamonn Hughes and Des O'Riain (eds.), *Ireland (Ulster), Scotland: Concepts, Contexts, Comparisons* (Belfast, 2003) 164-170:168.

<sup>164</sup> Strabo, *Geography*, 2.1.13, Freeman (tr.), *Ireland and the Classical World*, 42.

<sup>165</sup> Strabo, *Geography*, 1.4.4.; Freeman (tr.), *Ireland and the Classical World*, 40.

<sup>166</sup> On Ireland as a paradise island: Dagmar Ó Riain Raedel, 'The Other Paradise: Perceptions of Ireland in the Middle Ages,' in Rudolf Simek and Asya Ivanova (eds.), *Between the Islands—and the Continent: Papers on Hiberno-Scandinavian-Continental Relations in the Early Middle Ages* (Vienna, 2013).

## Adam, Gerald and Wonders in Peripheral Locations

Adam and Gerald transmit yet another *topos* from classical narrative: that of peripheral locations as places of wonders.<sup>167</sup> The fascination of the natural world is clearly evident in the collections of Pliny or Solinus, which are celebrations of the wonderful diversity of nature. The poet Horace encapsulates the human interest in wonders, they both excite and frighten: ‘Whether a man feels joy or grief, desire or fear, what matters it if, he has seen aught better or worse than expected, his eyes are fast riveted and mind and body benumbed?’<sup>168</sup>

In the classical era, wonders were often connected to far away locations. This is a long established connection. In Homer’s *Odyssey* we find islands inhabited by unusual people or animals, places where strange and magical things happen.<sup>169</sup> Later writers followed in Homer’s footsteps when they let remarkable and extraordinary events take place on distantly located islands.<sup>170</sup> Herodotus, Pliny and Solinus all described wonders that took place in distant locations. Adam and Gerald had access to the wonders described in Pliny, Solinus and Isidore of Seville. In the Middle Ages this *topos* was diffused in books of wonders such as *The Wonders of the East* (c 1000), by an anonymous writer, and Gervase of Tilbury’s *Otia Imperialia* (early thirteenth century), written as entertainment for the German Emperor Otto IV (1209-1218).<sup>171</sup> Whilst the wonders of the east were a genre in itself, some writers also located wonders in the western part of the world.<sup>172</sup> The Danish historian, Saxo Grammaticus (c. 1150-1215), wrote of Iceland as a place full of wonders.<sup>173</sup> There are Irish and Welsh sources that wrote of wonders in Ireland before Gerald, but according to Boivin, a comparison between Gerald’s wonders and those of the earlier sources does not permit to securely

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<sup>167</sup> On marvels and wonders: Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 94-120; Evelyn Edson, ‘Mapping in the Middle Ages: The Imaginary and the Real Universe of the *Mappaemundi*,’ in Leif Søndergård and Rasmus Thorning Hansen (eds.), *Monsters and Marvels and Miracles: Imaginary Journeys and Landscapes in the Middle Ages* (Odense, 2005) 11-25; Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 91; Caroline Bynum, ‘Wonder,’ *American Historical Review* 102 (1997) 1-26; Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago, 1988) 27-44.

<sup>168</sup> Horace, *Epistles*, Smith Palmer Bovie (tr.), 1. 6.12-14.

<sup>169</sup> Homer, *Odyssey*, VII, 254; IX, 39-132; XII, 129.

<sup>170</sup> Islands as special places in Graeco-Roman mythology: Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*; on Elysian Fields and Oceanic paradise islands see especially 290-303.

<sup>171</sup> *Wonders of the East* in: Andy Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies, Studies in Monsters of the Beowulf Manuscript* (Toronto, 1995), the appendix contains the work in Latin, with English translation. Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, S.E. Banks and J. W. Binns (tr. and ed.).

<sup>172</sup> Karl Steel, ‘Centaur, Satyr, and Cynocephali: Medieval Scholarly Teratology and the Question of the Human,’ in Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous* (Farnham, 2012) 257-274:261-262.

<sup>173</sup> Saxo Grammaticus, *The History of the Danes, Books I-IX*, Peter Fisher (tr.), Hilda Ellis Davidson (ed.) (Woodbridge, 1979) preface.



say that Gerald has used these sources, since oral tradition may account for certain similarities.<sup>174</sup> Both Isidore of Seville and Bede describe Britain and Ireland as places of wonders.

The idea of the strange and wonderful is apparent in Adam's and Gerald's work. To Adam wonders are God's work, incomprehensible to humans.<sup>175</sup> These sentiments were expressed by Augustine in relation to strange occurrences which were seen by some as portents: 'for how is that contrary to nature which happens by the will of God, since the will of so mighty a Creator is certainly the nature of each created thing?'<sup>176</sup> Gerald, who incorporated an entire book on wonders and miracles in Ireland in his *Topography*, explains the difference between miracles and wonders.<sup>177</sup> Miracles (*miracula*) are the unexpected as taking place by divine agency, at times mediated through saints, he tells us, whilst *mirabilia* are things that are 'marvellous in themselves.'<sup>178</sup> In view of the width of the subject I will restrict the discussion to wonders.

Gerald's interest in wonders is part of a cultural development or fashion. The twelfth century was an era of renewed interest in humanism and learning which saw the foundation of the first universities in the western world.<sup>179</sup> It also saw a great interest in stories of marvels and miracles, of monsters and ghosts.<sup>180</sup> In Ireland, in Gerald's view, the wonders are abundant:

Just as the countries of the East are remarkable and distinguished for certain prodigies peculiar and native to themselves, so the boundaries of the West also are made remarkable by their own wonders of nature. For sometimes tired, as it were, of the true and serious, she [Nature] draws aside and goes away, and in these remote parts indulges herself in these secret and distant freaks.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 86. Earlier sources on wonders in Ireland include the ninth-century Welsh historian Nennius and the eleventh-century Dublin Bishop Patrick. On Nennius see: Elizabeth Boyle, 'On the Wonders of Ireland: Translation and Adaptation,' in Elizabeth Boyle and Deborah Hayden (eds.) *Authorities and Adaptations* (Cambridge, in press) 229-258. Bishop Patrick: A. Gwynn (ed. and tr.), *The Writings of Bishop Patrick, 1074-1084* (Dublin, 1955), the poem *de mirabilibus Hibernie*, 56-71.

<sup>175</sup> *AB* IV, xLii.

<sup>176</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 21.8.

<sup>177</sup> Book II of the *Topography*, chapters 33-83.

<sup>178</sup> *Top.* 33. See also Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind, Theory, Record and Event 1000-1215* (Aldershot, 1982) 3-4, 221, footnote 4.

<sup>179</sup> Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, 54;

<sup>180</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York, 2001) 38.

<sup>181</sup> *Top.* prologue.

The unexpected is a *topos* that reinforces the remoteness and isolation of the locations.<sup>182</sup> When Gerald connects the wonders of the east with those of the west, he recognises that the western periphery of the world mirrors that of the eastern; because of their equidistance from the centre of the world they are similar. At the periphery of the world things are not as they appear or are different from the norm. Wonders occur in the natural world, but it also affects the appearance of people living in same areas, the subject of the next chapter. Adam and Gerald use wonders to promote their respective agendas. For Adam the wonders reinforce Sweden's and Norway's end of the world location, which in its turn puts emphasis on his interest in biblical prophecy related to conversion. For Gerald, it suits his colonial agenda to support the view of Ireland being a place apart from the rest of the world, to justify the conquest. In this section we will focus on wonders related to islands and wells, as well as briefly discuss the wildlife of the particular places in question.

Islands were special places in Graeco-Roman mythology, both as paradisiacal places, as discussed earlier, and as places of wonders. Isidore of Seville gives them their own chapter in his geography section.<sup>183</sup> Among the strange islands he describes we find Britain and Ireland and other islands of the Ocean, like the Orkney Islands and Thule, as well as islands in the Mediterranean. Adam follows this *topos* of unusual islands when he tells us of Helgoland (Holy Land), off the Frisian coast, an island inhabited by monks, where transgressions against the monastic community are always punished.<sup>184</sup> Through the power of God the assailant will perish in a shipwreck or get killed. Another island of the same name is Helgoland, a region of Norway, which Adam believes to be an island.<sup>185</sup> According to Adam the inhabitants apply this name to the island as they believe that it is holy because they have no rational explanation for the phenomena of the summer solstice.<sup>186</sup>

For Gerald, Ireland has exceptional wonders; many of them take place on islands in lakes, places that seem to be imbued with supernatural qualities.<sup>187</sup> On one island

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<sup>182</sup> Scully, 'At World's End; Scotland and Ireland in the Graeco-Roman Imagination,' 164-170:167. See also Mittman, 'The Other Close at Hand: Gerald of Wales and the 'Marvels of the West,' 97-112.

<sup>183</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.

<sup>184</sup> *AB* IV, iii.

<sup>185</sup> *AB* IV, xxxviii. Adam, or a later scribe, changes his mind about the island status in schol. 159.

<sup>186</sup> *AB* IV, xxxviii.

<sup>187</sup> *Top.* 37, 38, 39.

human corpses exposed in the open do not putrefy.<sup>188</sup> Another island has dual qualities: it is divided between good and evil spirits; one half of the island has a church visited by angels and local saints, the other part of the island is stormy and ugly.<sup>189</sup> Gerald reports that those persons who, as a penance, endure the torments of the malignant spirits there will not have to endure the pains of hell, unless they commit a very serious crime.

The mythical Thule is the most famous of these islands in the Ocean.<sup>190</sup> Isidore of Seville mentions it as the last of the islands in the western and northern Ocean; he refers to the summer solstice and informs us that beyond this island the water is 'sluggish and frozen.'<sup>191</sup> We have already seen how Adam also sees Thule as the last island of the Ocean, and that he equates Thule with Iceland. Regarding Iceland, Adam reports the 'remarkable fact that the ice on account of its age is so black and dry in appearance that it burns when fire is set to it.'<sup>192</sup> Unlike Adam, Gerald does not link Thule with Iceland. He remarks that Thule is very well known in the east but unknown in the west.<sup>193</sup> In relation to Iceland Gerald briefly mentions 'gerfalcons and big and noble hawks,' fine birds that are linked with nobility or royalty, but they are not specific to the location.<sup>194</sup> Gerald must certainly be familiar with the wonders in Iceland, through the connection between the Northmen in Ireland and Iceland. Saxo, contemporaneous with Gerald, explicitly points out that 'Iceland is noteworthy for its marvels' and gives us a vivid depiction of these.<sup>195</sup> In contrast to his treatment of Ireland, Gerald is not interested in depicting Iceland as departing from the norm, possibly because he is aware of his own family's origin from the Northmen. The same stock that colonised Normandy also colonised Iceland. Gerald, as an educated and well-travelled person, must have been aware of this.

Gerald does not emphasise Britain as a place of wonder, although he mentions the hybrid stag-cow in Chester, and strange occurrences also in Wales.<sup>196</sup> But it would seem as if Gerald is unwilling to depict at least the central parts of Britain as a

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<sup>188</sup> *Top.* 39.

<sup>189</sup> *Top.* 38.

<sup>190</sup> Mund-Dopchie, *Ultima Thulé, Histoire d'un Lieu et Genèse d'un Mythe*.

<sup>191</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.4.

<sup>192</sup> *AB* IV, xxxvi.

<sup>193</sup> *Top.* 50.

<sup>194</sup> *Top.* 46.

<sup>195</sup> Saxo Grammaticus, *The History of the Danes*, preface.

<sup>196</sup> *Top.* 55: In Wales for example, *The Journey through Wales*, 2.11.

wondrous location. Unlike Gerald, Isidore of Seville and Bede alike speak of Britain as location for the unusual. Isidore of Seville mentions hot springs, an abundance of metals; jet and pearls in Britain.<sup>197</sup> What is most peculiar, according to Isidore of Seville, is the Isle of Thanet, separated from Britain by a narrow estuary, which is free from snakes, but its soil, if removed elsewhere, has the power to kill snakes.<sup>198</sup> Bede speaks of Britain's hot springs, and the health giving qualities of the water.<sup>199</sup>

Wells or springs with unusual qualities are another source of wonders. Isidore of Seville has a chapter on 'Different Kinds of Water,' many of which refer to wells or springs.<sup>200</sup> Gerald has a full chapter on 'the wonderful nature of wells,' most of these in Ireland.<sup>201</sup> One well in Munster will immediately turn a person grey if he washes in its water.<sup>202</sup> In Connaught there is a well which is poisonous to animals whilst men can drink from it.<sup>203</sup> In the medieval account of St Brendan's voyage the monks are warned not to drink from a well; if a monk does, he will sleep for twenty-four hours.<sup>204</sup> Saxo speaks of a well there which destroys the original nature of an object by the 'malignant reek' of its water.<sup>205</sup> Iceland and Ireland, for Saxo as for Gerald, are all peripheral places and thus share characteristics of 'otherness.'<sup>206</sup> Gerald describes a similar well in his account of Norway.<sup>207</sup> He tells us that 'its efficacy is the greater in as much as it is nearer the frigid zone.'<sup>208</sup> This clearly tells us that, in Gerald's view, the more remote a place the more strange the nature will appear.

The unusual character of these regions include wildlife which here differs from the norm. In ancient narratives the periphery was a location of mythical or strange

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<sup>197</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.2.

<sup>198</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.3.

<sup>199</sup> Bede: *HE*.1.1.

<sup>200</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIII.xiii.

<sup>201</sup> *Top*. 40.

<sup>202</sup> *Top*. 40.

<sup>203</sup> *Top*. 40.

<sup>204</sup> *The Voyage of Saint Brendan*, xi.

<sup>205</sup> Saxo Grammaticus, *The History of the Danes*, preface.

<sup>206</sup> Early modern scholars reacted against the depiction of their nations as 'the other.' See Hiram Morgan, 'The Island Defenders: Humanist Patriots in early modern Iceland and Ireland,' Centre for Neo Latin Studies, 17/1/2014, [www.ucc.ie/acad/classics/CNLS/lectures/Morgon\\_iceland.html](http://www.ucc.ie/acad/classics/CNLS/lectures/Morgon_iceland.html).

<sup>207</sup> *Top*. 40.

<sup>208</sup> *Top*. 40

animals.<sup>209</sup> For Adam, the Rhiphaean Mountains are ‘terrible for its perpetual snows,’ but they also teeming with wildlife that to Adam is unusual.<sup>210</sup>

In those same mountains there are such large numbers of big game that the greatest part of the country subsists only of the beasts of the forest. Aurochs, buffaloes, and elk are taken there as in Sweden. Bison, furthermore, are caught in Slavia and Russia. Only in Norway, however, are there black fox and hares, white martens and bears of the same colour who live under water like aurochs.<sup>211</sup>

We have already noted these mountains as markers for the limit of Europe.<sup>212</sup> Because of its peripheral northern location, nature here is different. Thietmar of Merseburg (d. 1018) stated that ‘no one can comprehend the variety of the northern regions and what marvellous things nature creates there.’<sup>213</sup> Adam too seems fascinated by the wildlife in the cold and snowy region. The animals that Adam describes are not mythical or fabled, for instance the bears ‘who live under water’ that we know as polar bears. However, people in the medieval era, as Mittman points out, are not likely to have made a distinction between real and imaginary animals; the same applies to wonders.<sup>214</sup> A scholium mentions a griffin as inhabiting the Rhiphaean Mountains.<sup>215</sup> The griffin is a high-status mythological animal, a lion with an eagle’s head. Pomponius Mela, Adam’s possible source for this information, tells us that the griffins guarded gold mines in a location beyond the Rhiphaean Mountains.<sup>216</sup> There is a longstanding tradition about griffins as guardians of gold; in Herodotus they are associated with the gold of the Hyperboreans.<sup>217</sup> Isidore of Seville does not relate the stories of the gold but states that the griffins are born in the Hyperborean mountains.<sup>218</sup> The writer of the scholium—and we are not certain if this is Adam—

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<sup>209</sup> For sources on fabulous beasts from antique to medieval times: Joseph Nigg (ed.) *The Book of Fabulous Beasts: A Treasury of Writings from Ancient Times to the Present* (Oxford, 1999).

<sup>210</sup> AB IV, xxxii.

<sup>211</sup> AB IV, xxxii.

<sup>212</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos*, 1.2.

<sup>213</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, *Ottonian Germany: The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg*, David A. Warner (tr. and notes) (Manchester, 2001) 7.39.

<sup>214</sup> Mittman and Kim, *Inconceivable Beasts*, 173f. See also Boria Sax, *Imaginary Animals: The Monstrous, the Wondrous and the Human* (London, 2013) 43.

<sup>215</sup> AB IV, xxxii. Griffins, schol. 137.

<sup>216</sup> Pomponius Mela, *De chorographia*, 1.1.

<sup>217</sup> Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.13, 4.27.

<sup>218</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XII.ii.17.

appears aware of this tradition. The mention of the griffin increases the bond to the classical world, as well as adds to the mythical aura of these mountains.

Gerald too describes the wildlife in Ireland as unusual.<sup>219</sup> He encounters animals, birds or fish in Ireland that are different from those of other places.<sup>220</sup> He tells us of birds with a two-fold nature—they belong to two different species—and birds that are not true to type.<sup>221</sup> Storks are rarely seen in Ireland, Gerald states, and if they are, they are black.<sup>222</sup> Ireland, according to Gerald, lacks frogs and snakes.<sup>223</sup> The lack of snakes in Ireland is a fact but also an ancient *topos* referring to islands. In the last century Krappe discussed Ireland and other snake-free islands, making the case that in ancient and medieval narrative the absence of serpents is often attributed to holy men, or, before Christianity, to heroes.<sup>224</sup> However, Gerald's sources Solinus and Isidore of Seville report these strange occurrences as a matter of fact; this is simply what is expected of locations on the periphery. Solinus reports the lack of snakes in Ireland and also tells us there are few birds there.<sup>225</sup> Solinus also claims that there are no bees in Ireland, and relates that the nature of the soil in Ireland has the unusual quality of getting rid of beehives if taken elsewhere.<sup>226</sup> Isidore of Seville repeats this information regarding Ireland: 'There no snakes are found, birds are scarce, and there are no bees, so that if someone were to sprinkle dust or pebbles brought from there among beehives in some other place, the swarms would desert the honeycombs.'<sup>227</sup> It is reminiscent of Isidore of Seville's depiction of the Isle of Thanet, where the soil also had these snake-killing properties if removed elsewhere.<sup>228</sup> These places have common features: they are peripheral or they are islands. Isidore of Seville mentions other islands with the same qualities, for instance on Ebosus (Ibiza) 'serpents flee its soil,' whereas the island opposite is full of snakes.<sup>229</sup> Bede also states that Ireland is free of snakes. But it is not the nature of the soil but the Irish air that is fatal to snakes: if they are brought near the

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<sup>219</sup> For Gerald as an acute observer of nature, see Antonia Gransden, 'Realistic Observation in Twelfth-Century England,' *Speculum* 47 (1972) 29-51: 49-51.

<sup>220</sup> *Top.* 5-21.

<sup>221</sup> *Top.* 12.

<sup>222</sup> *Top.* 15.

<sup>223</sup> *Top.* 21.

<sup>224</sup> Alexander H. Krappe, 'St Patrick and the Snakes,' *Traditio* 5 (1947) 323-330.

<sup>225</sup> Solinus, *Collectanea*, 22.2-6. Freeman (tr.) *Ireland and the Classical World*, 87.

<sup>226</sup> Solinus, *Collectanea*, 22.2-6; Freeman (tr.) *Ireland and the Classical World*, 87. Gerald refutes Solinus' claim in *Top.* 2

<sup>227</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.6.

<sup>228</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.3.

<sup>229</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.43.

island the mere scent of the air kills them. He tells us that ‘almost everything that the island produces is efficacious against poison.’<sup>230</sup> Gerald agrees. To him the very air of the nation can render poison harmless; ‘And if a poison is brought in, no matter what it be, from elsewhere, immediately it loses all the force of its evil.’<sup>231</sup> Thus Gerald, following classical and medieval authorities, presents Ireland as a remarkable place.

## Conclusion

Like ancient geographers, Adam and Gerald placed Sweden, Norway and Ireland on the very periphery of the world, in what is thought of as a terrible and endless ocean surrounding the landmass of the three continents that constituted the known world. In relation to the centre of the world, Jerusalem, they are remote islands, the last habitations of mankind; ‘another wold.’ Although aware that Sweden and Norway are situated on a peninsula Adam’s narrative places these locations in the context of islands. To Adam islands in the ocean are linked with the fulfilment of biblical prophecy; the salvation of mankind. In spite of the islands’ location in the northern ocean, near the frozen zone, Adam and Gerald choose to follow an ancient tradition which portrays islands in the ocean as blessed and fertile. As remote peripheral places these islands are also places of wonders and the unexpected. This oceanic peripheral location influences nature and wildlife, as well as the appearance and character of the inhabitants; the subject of the next chapter.

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<sup>230</sup> Bede: *HE*. 1.1.

<sup>231</sup> *Top*. 22.

## Chapter 3

### Description of Peoples in Adam and Gerald: Reform Agendas, Conversion and Salvation, and Responses to Ancient Stereotypes

#### Introduction

This chapter examines Adam's and Gerald's representations of peoples inhabiting the places they describe within the framework of classical and medieval ethnography, and within the context of the authors' political and ecclesiastical agendas. The focus in this chapter is on Adam's and Gerald's treatment of real peoples with an attested history, as opposed to the fabled 'monstrous' peoples and individual monsters, also present in these locations, which will be the subject of the next chapter. In ancient thought, the peripheral Oceanic location of these places influences the character of their inhabitants, who are often described in a stereotypical way. Adam and Gerald are aware of ancient ethnic stereotypes from their knowledge of classical and late antique ethnographical and geographical authorities, including Pliny, Solinus, Martianus Capella, and Isidore of Seville.<sup>1</sup> These stereotypes tend to be positive or negative: peripheral peoples are often either portrayed as vicious, warlike, ferocious, fickle and irrational, or the opposite: idealised as pious, praiseworthy peoples living simple, unmaterialistic lives.<sup>2</sup> Adam and Gerald apply both negative and positive stereotypes to their own representations but adapt the models and sources for their own purposes, influenced by their contemporary contexts: Adam's views were shaped by his ideals of pastoral care, reform and the importance of conversion of polytheists; Gerald's by his ideals of reform, crusade and imperialism.

In order to discuss national characteristics of various peoples, we need to consider Adam's and Gerald's definition of a 'people.' The places they wrote about were not

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<sup>1</sup> Pliny the Elder, *NH*; Solinus, *Collectanea*; Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*; Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*. For literature on ancient stereotypes see: Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*; Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*; Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian* (Oxford, 1989); Yves Albert Dauge, *Le Barbare. Recherches sur la conception romaine de la barbarie et de la civilisation* (Brussels, 1981). The use of ancient stereotypes in the north of Europe in the Middle Ages: Fraesdorff, *Der barbarische Norden*; Scior, *Das Eigene und das Fremde*.

<sup>2</sup> Dauge, *Le Barbare*, 424-449, 460; Woolf, *Tales of the Barbarians*, 113-114; Killeen, 'Ireland in the Greek and Roman Writers,' 207-215:207-208.



centralised monarchies like, for instance, Germany or England at this time.<sup>3</sup> Yet Adam and Gerald, like other medieval sources, regard the Swedes, Norwegians, and the Irish as unified groups of people or nations. The words that Adam and Gerald use to define them are ‘people’ (*gens*) and ‘nation’ (*natio*). The translations of Adam’s and Gerald’s narratives used in this thesis render the words *gens* and *natio* as ‘people,’ ‘folk’ or ‘nation,’ but also, on occasion, as ‘tribe’ or ‘race.’<sup>4</sup> ‘Tribe’ or ‘race’ have negative and misleading associations for a modern reader, whilst for a medieval person *gens* and *natio* simply mark a common heritage and are used for people of the western core cultures as well as for the peoples on the periphery of Europe.<sup>5</sup> Isidore of Seville (c. 560- 636), the most trusted authority on etymology in the Middle Ages, explains that the words *gens* and *natio* are similar in their meaning and in their origin. Whilst *gens* is derived from words that refer to a shared heritage and generations of families, *natio* comes from *nasci* which means being born.<sup>6</sup> Isidore points to the common descent for all mankind from the sons of Noah who survived the flood.<sup>7</sup> All peoples were ‘part of the creation of God’s humanity,’ although divided up into various separate national genealogies, a belief shared by Adam and Gerald.<sup>8</sup>

In medieval society, shared beliefs about the past were a source of national and ethnic identity as well as an indication of status.<sup>9</sup> Nations related their status to a heroic past—the further back they could project their history, the more prestigious their status became. This can be seen by the importance attached to origin legends and histories of heroic deeds in nations that had been established after the break-up of the western part of the Roman Empire. The new emerging nations, like the Franks and the Goths,

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<sup>3</sup> Nick Webber, *The Evolution of Norman Identity 911-1154* (Woodbridge, 2005) 8-9. For a modern definition of nation and state, see Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London, 1991) 14.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of translations of *gens*: *AB* I, v (folk), *AB* I, iii (folk), *AB* I, iii (people), *AB* I, iv (people), *AB* I, vii (folk), *AB* IV, xvi (people), *AB* IV, xvii (people), *AB* IV, xxvi (folk). Examples of *gens* translated as ‘tribe’: *AB* I, vii, *AB* I, xLii, *AB* III, xxii. Examples from O’Meara’s translation of the *Topography*: *natione* as ‘people’ in *Top.* 90, 94, *natione* as ‘men of this country’ and *gens* as ‘race’ in *Top.* 83. For a discussion on translation of these words in medieval texts, see Robert Bartlett, ‘Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity,’ *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no.1 (2001) 39-55: 43-44. See also Mittman, ‘“Are the ‘Monstrous Races’ Races?”’ 36-51:39-40.

<sup>5</sup> Bartlett, ‘Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity,’ 39-55:42f.; Mittman, ‘“Are the ‘Monstrous Races’ Races?”’ 36-51:47-48.

<sup>6</sup> The names of nations (*De gentium vocabulis*), Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, IX ii.1.

<sup>7</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*: Shem IX.ii.3-9; Ham IX.ii.10-25; Japheth: IX.ii.26-37.

<sup>8</sup> Bartlett, ‘Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity,’ 39-55:44-45.

<sup>9</sup> Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (ed.), *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2000) intro (by Innes) 1.

sought to raise the status of their nations by creating narratives emulating the long history of Rome, which had traced its roots to the fall of Troy.<sup>10</sup> The nations that now emerged as powerful in western Europe had their own authors writing down or fabricating origin myths of their own peoples to rival—or link with—the history of Rome.<sup>11</sup> For example, Jordanes wrote a history of the Goths or *Gaete*, the *Getica*, giving them an ancestry to surpass that of Rome in age, whilst Geoffrey of Monmouth traced the origins of the Britons to Brutus, a descendant of Aeneas, the protagonist of Virgil's *Aeneid*, who survived the fall of Troy.<sup>12</sup> Other authorities do not look at Rome but seek to build biblical associations to give status to a people. To Isidore of Seville, the Goths are 'thought to have been named after Magog, the son of Japheth,' making them one of the oldest people in the western world.<sup>13</sup> The Irish medieval national origin legend, outlined in *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, connects Japheth with the origin of the Irish and Scythians, and relates their history in a narrative that appears inspired by biblical accounts: it sees the Irish in exile seeking their 'Promised Land.'<sup>14</sup>

Ethnographers believe that peoples that share a common descent also share characteristics which distinguish them from other peoples. Fenton, who made a study of William of Malmesbury, established that in order to differentiate between peoples, a medieval writer might identify specific peoples by using their common characteristics.<sup>15</sup> These could range from relating to climate and physical surroundings, to temperament and lifestyle.<sup>16</sup> Bartlett points out that these common

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<sup>10</sup> The legend of Rome's history is celebrated in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Philip R. Hardie, *Virgil's Aeneid, Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford, 1986).

<sup>11</sup> Walter Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550-800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, 1988). See also Rix, *The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination: Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature*, 15-19.

<sup>12</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*. Jordanes was secretary to Cassiodorus, the historian of the Goths whose work has not survived, see Arne Soby Christensen: *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths* (Copenhagen, 2002) 18. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*, 1.3.

<sup>13</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, IX.ii.89.

<sup>14</sup> *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, R.A. Stewart Macalister (ed.). On *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* see John Carey, *The Irish National Origin-Legend: Synthetic Pseudo History*, Quiggin Pamphlets on the Sources of Medieval Gaelic History (Cambridge, 1994); R. Mark Scowcroft, 'Leabhar Gabhála, Part I: The Growth of the Text,' *Ériu* 38 (1987) 81-142; R. Mark Scowcroft, 'Leabhar Gabhála, Part II: The Growth of the Text,' *Ériu* 39 (1988) 1-66. See also Edel Bhreathnach, *Ireland in the Medieval World AD 400-1000* (Dublin, 2014) 5; Joseph Lennon, *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History* (New York, 2004) 30f.

<sup>15</sup> Kirsten A. Fenton, *Gender, Nation and Conquest in the works of William of Malmesbury* (Woodbridge, 2008) 90.

<sup>16</sup> R. R. Davies, 'The People of Britain and Ireland 1100-1400,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (Sixth Series) (1994) 1-20; Joep Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam, 2006) 26.

shared traits include customs, language and law.<sup>17</sup> The Swedes, Norwegians and Irish that Adam and Gerald respectively depict are bound together by common traits that define them as separate peoples.

The first part of the chapter deals with Adam. The second part of the chapter, which treats Gerald and his concerns, is preceded by a brief introduction on Gerald. The section on Adam explores what were common topics of ethnography since Graeco-Roman times, starting with names and origins. A key argument regarding origins concerns the importance Adam places on the links between the Swedes and the Goths, an ancient people in European history. To Adam the Swedes are synonymous with Goths in a missionary and salvation context. Adam suggests that they are a special people linked with scriptural prophecy that portends the salvation of mankind. He interprets a prophecy by Ezekiel, which he believes underlines the role of the Goths and Swedes in conversion and salvation, as about to take place in his own time. Adam's positive representation of the Swedes and Norwegians is partly due to the role Adam assigns to the Goths in relation to salvation. As instrumental in the fulfilment of biblical prophecy, they are depicted as ideal peoples, already living in accordance to the values of the early church. Adam's view becomes apparent in his use of positive biblical and classical stereotypes when representing the Swedes' and the Norwegians' appearance, character, lifestyle, and social organisation, topics that are interwoven or linked.

Also serving Adam's agenda is the contrast these positive depictions provide to the largely negative image of Adalbert, and the troubled state of Hamburg-Bremen, as discussed in the first chapter. The section on Adam's ideals of conversion further emphasises the positive image of the Swedes and Norwegians. These ideals of conversion are similar to that of Bede and Gregory the Great: it should be done by example and not by force. Adam's criticism of missionary priests in Sweden, corrupting the innocent and unspoiled inhabitants, shows the importance of pastoral care, and underscores the failure of Hamburg-Bremen to provide this service. This is further reinforced by Adam's depiction of Norway, a nation largely disassociated from

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<sup>17</sup> Bartlett, 'Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity,' 39-55:47.

the mission of Hamburg-Bremen, which stands out as a successful example of conversion.

It should be noted that this thesis will concentrate on the Swedes and Norwegians of Adam's own era that are depicted in his fourth book. The way the character of the Swedes and Norwegians emerges in Adam's account is twofold. One relates to the past, one to the present. The first two parts of Adam's narrative describe events of the ninth and tenth centuries, the period when men from the north of Europe (mostly from Sweden, Norway and Denmark, now often referred to as Vikings or Norse) attacked, plundered and occasionally colonised other parts of Europe.<sup>18</sup> It is not surprising then that Adam here invokes the stereotype of the ancient barbarian warrior: destructive and ferocious.<sup>19</sup> A number of sources from this era give a similar picture of the peoples from the north.<sup>20</sup> The focus in this thesis is on the Swedes and Norwegians that are contemporaneous with Adam. For them Adam draws on another ancient stereotype to construct a positive identity.

### **Names for Sweden and Norway and their Inhabitants in Adam and his Sources and Models**

Names are important as they tell us something about people, either through etymology, origins, or location. By some of the names Adam uses for the Swedes, he reveals his view of the inhabitants of the northern region. In Adam's time 'north' was seen as a spatial unit, consisting of territories to the north and east of Germany, thus including Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Russia.<sup>21</sup> Whilst the Norwegians in Adam's narrative appear as one people, Adam's Swedes—although represented as one people—include

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<sup>18</sup> Dick Harrison and Kristina Svensson, *Vikingaliv* (Värnamo, 2007); Eric Christiansen, *The Norsemen in the Viking Age* (Oxford, 2002); Judith Jesch (ed.), *The Scandinavians from the Vendel Period to the Tenth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective* (Woodbridge, 2002); Gro Steinsland, *Människor och Makter i Vikingarnas Värld* (Stockholm, 1998); Else Roesdahl and David M. Wilson (eds.), *From Viking to Crusader: The Scandinavians and Europe 800-1200* (New York, 1992); David M. Wilson, *The Vikings and their Origins* (London, 1970 and 1986). An eye-witness' account in: Notker Balbulus (Notker the Stammerer) in *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, Lewis Thorpe (tr. and intro.) (Harmondsworth, 1969) II, 14.

<sup>19</sup> For example in *AB* I, xxi, xLvi.

<sup>20</sup> Helmold of Bosau, *Helmoldi presbyterii bozoviensis chronica slavorum*, Bernhard Schmeidler (ed.); *Aelnoths Krönike*, Erling Albrechtsen (tr. and notes) (Odense, 1984); *The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg; The Annals of Fulda*, Timothy Reuter (tr. and intro.) Ninth Century Histories Vol. 2 (Manchester, 1992); *The Annals of St-Bertin*, Janet L. Nelson (tr.), Ninth Century Histories Vol. 1, (Manchester, 1991).

<sup>21</sup> Fraesdorff, 'The Power of Imagination,' 309-332:312.

variously named constituent peoples: the Goths, Wärmilani, Skritefingi, and Finns, ‘besides countless other Swedish peoples.’<sup>22</sup> From the preceding quote it is evident that Adam thinks of them all as Swedes. The most important of the Swedish peoples are the Goths, as ‘the Gothic peoples rule in Sweden.’<sup>23</sup> The importance of the Goths is discussed in the sections on origins, conversion and salvation. Adam also uses collective names for the people of the north, Northmen and Hyperboreans, implying that all the peoples of the north have shared characteristics.

The name Sweden is of uncertain etymology.<sup>24</sup> Adam varies the spelling of the name of the place and its inhabitants: the country is *Sueoniae* or *Seudiae*, the inhabitants *Sueoni* or *Suedi*. Adam regards the terms as interchangeable as is evident from his writing: ‘*Igitur ut brevem Sueoniae vel Seudiae descriptionem faciamus*’ (Let us now proceed to give a brief description of *Sueoniae* or *Suediae*).<sup>25</sup> This thesis will follow Adam. Historians have attempted to understand if there is a pattern in the way he uses the words. Hallencreutz argues that Adam uses *Sueoni* for pre-Christian Swedes as an all-inclusive term and *Suedio* for the emerging Christian sphere.<sup>26</sup> Christiansen has a different view: ‘there were *Suedi* in *Suedia*, and a large ring of *Sueones* or Swedish satellites.’<sup>27</sup> Nyberg suggests that *Suedia* is the term for a specific known region in the central parts of the country and that *Sueonia* is a more encompassing term for a larger area from which people attend the polytheist ceremonies at Uppsala in central Sweden.<sup>28</sup> It is worth considering that the names used by Adam are to some extent dependant on the name used by a particular source: for instance, when citing the *Life of Ansgar*, Adam follows Rimbert’s use of *Sueonia*. Since Adam clearly regards the two names as interchangeable, this present thesis is hesitant to read any specific meaning into Adam’s use of these names. In one instance Adam calls Sweden *Suigia*, clearly a variation on the same name but with a spelling that foreshadows what the present inhabitants call their country: *Sverige*.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> AB IV, xxiv.

<sup>23</sup> AB I, xxvi.

<sup>24</sup> On the uncertainty of the origins of the name, see Mats G. Larsson, *Färder till Sveriges Födelse: En Samlingsutgåva av Svitjod, Resor till Sveriges Ursprung* (Stockholm, 2004) 17f.

<sup>25</sup> *Adam Bremensis*, IV, xxv. In Tschan’s translation *Sueoniae* or *Suediae* is rendered as ‘Sueonia or Sweden.’

<sup>26</sup> Carl F. Hallencreutz, *Adam Bremensis and Sueonia* (Uppsala, 1984) 30.

<sup>27</sup> Christiansen, *The Norsemen in the Viking Age*, 131.

<sup>28</sup> Nyberg, ‘Stad, skrift och stift, några historiska inledningsfrågor,’ 295-339: 313.

<sup>29</sup> *Suigiam vel Norvegiam*, *Adam Bremensis*, III, xxv.

The etymology of the other peoples in Sweden is equally uncertain, for example, we do not know if the *Wermilani* gave their name to the county of Värmland or the county gave its name to its inhabitants.<sup>30</sup> An exception is the name *Skritefingi* which originates in the Western Nordic (Västnordiska) term for going on skis: *skridá á skálum*; a particular characteristic of these peoples.<sup>31</sup> Adam recounts the skiing skills of this people when he tells us that they ski faster than animals can run.<sup>32</sup> The *Skritefingi* are then named after a typical characteristic of their people.

In the case of Norway, Adam suggests that it is the country's geographical location that has given the people their name. Adam gives us both the medieval and ancient names for Norway. The name *Norguegia* must be relatively recent in Adam's time, as he explains that it is the modern name for country.<sup>33</sup> Thus Adam uses the same name as the inhabitants themselves, although Latinised as *Norguegia*, and with a number of variant spellings.<sup>34</sup> *Norguegia* is close to the name the current inhabitants today call the country in their own language, *Norge*.

Adam also uses collective names for the peoples of the 'north.' One of these names is *Nortmannia*, which is also a term for Norway, a name taken from a territorial description of a region.<sup>35</sup> This can also be used as a collective name for peoples of a northern descent.<sup>36</sup> Adam applies 'Northmen' in a more general manner to the people of the north, following the authority of Einhard (775-840).<sup>37</sup> The Northmen also include people that lived 'beyond Denmark' who live in France (Normandy). Although this is mentioned in a scholio—and there is no certainty as to who made these

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<sup>30</sup> AB IV, xxiv.

<sup>31</sup> AB IV, xxiv. Inger Zachrisson, *Möten i Gränsland: Samer och Germaner i Mellanskandinavien* (Stockholm, 1997) 158.

<sup>32</sup> AB IV, xxxii.

<sup>33</sup> 'Haec a modernis dicitur Norguegia.' Adam Bremensis, IV, xxxi. *Norguegia* stems from *Norðrvegr*: *Norð* (north), and *vegr* (way/route), a name that simply implies 'north,' see Tatiana N. Jackson, 'Ways on the 'Mental Map' of Medieval Scandinavia,' in Wilhelm Heizmann, Klaus Bödl and Heinrich Beck, (eds.), *Analecta Septentrionalia: Beiträge zur nordgermanischen Kultur-und Literaturgeschichte* (Berlin, 2009) 211-220:214-216.

<sup>34</sup> This new and modern way has apparently no fixed spelling in Adam's narrative but is written as *Norvegia*, *Norwehia*, *Nordwehia*, *Nordveia*, *Norveia*, *Norguegia* and *Nortweia*; see Cardinali, *Adam Bremensis*, Vol 1, 528.

<sup>35</sup> AB IV, xxxi. See also Christiansen, *The Norsemen in the Viking Age*, 117. Ó Muirthe suggests the term Northmen 'implies that they thought of themselves as a northern branch of a larger people, which can only have been the Germans,' see Diarmaid Ó Muirthe, *From the Viking Hoard: Dictionary of Scandinavian Words in the Languages of Britain and Ireland* (Dublin, 2010) intro. xx.

<sup>36</sup> Nortmanni or Nordmanni. Cardinali, *Adam Bremensis*, Vol 1, 526.

<sup>37</sup> AB I, xiv, see also AB I, Lxi.

additions—Adam appears to be well-informed about these events.<sup>38</sup> This is evident from extended description of the family connections between the Norwegian and Danish families that conquered England and those of the same origins in Normandy.<sup>39</sup> Another name used by Adam to describe the Northmen is Hyperboreans, a people from ancient narratives. The name would immediately tell the learned medieval reader something about the characteristics of these peoples.

### **Adam, the Origins of the Swedes and their Identification with Goths and Scythians**

Adam does not specifically spell out the origin legends of the Swedes, but by associating them with the Goths, he imposes the Goths' long and heroic history on the Swedes. The Goths, according to Jordanes, left their place of origin, the island of Scandza, to settle in Scythia, a large region to the northeast of Greece and Rome.<sup>40</sup> Scandza, as we saw in the previous chapter, is an early name for Sweden. The Goths invaded the European continent after the breakup of the Western Empire and became powerful and influential in Europe from the fourth century AD.<sup>41</sup> The Goths were divided into two major peoples, the Visigoths and the Ostrogoths, who settled in the western and eastern part of Europe respectively.<sup>42</sup> As their names suggests, Visigoths means 'good' or 'noble' Goths, whereas Ostrogoth means 'Goth of the rising sun,' or 'Goth glorified by the rising sun.'<sup>43</sup> Adam certainly knows a version of this story and is aware of the importance of the Goths in European history.<sup>44</sup> This becomes evident when, in one instance, he divides the Goths in Sweden in the same manner as those on the continent of Europe generally, into eastern (*orientales*) and western (*occidentales*) Goths.<sup>45</sup> Adam's pride in this lineage can be observed when he calls the Eastern and

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<sup>38</sup> AB Schol. 143.

<sup>39</sup> AB II, Li-Lv.

<sup>40</sup> On Scythia: 'Where is Scythia?' in François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History* (Berkeley, 1988) 12-33.

<sup>41</sup> Ingmar Stenroth, *Myten om Goterna, från Antiken till Romantiken* (Stockholm, 2002); Christensen, *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths*.

<sup>42</sup> Jordanes writes of the division of Ostrogoths and Visigoths: Jordanes, *Getica*, XXV and later chapters.

<sup>43</sup> Herwig Wolfram, *History of the Goths* (Berkeley, 1988) 25; Christensen: *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths*, 206.

<sup>44</sup> AB I, xxvi.

<sup>45</sup> Östergötland and Västergötland, AB IV, xxiii. 'et ipsi populis Suediae proximi ad nos habitant Gothi qui occidentales dicuntur, alii sunt orientales.' Adam Bremensis, IV, xxiii.

Western Goths ‘the two noble Swedish peoples.’<sup>46</sup> Adam, it should be noted, is not alone in linking the Goths with Sweden in this era. When Pope Gregory VII wrote a letter to the two Swedish kings Inge and Halstan in 1080, less than ten years after Adam’s work was issued, he calls them *Visigothorum Regibus*, kings of the Visigoths.<sup>47</sup>

The Goths have a long history. Isidore of Seville tells us that they are ‘thought to have been named after Magog, the son of Japheth, because of the similarity of the last syllable.’<sup>48</sup> As Magog was a grandson of Noah, they are, by implication, one of the oldest European peoples.<sup>49</sup> Pride in the link between Magog and the Goths is evident in the work of the Norman historian William of Jumièges.<sup>50</sup> He tells us that the Goths were descendants of Magog who had multiplied, then conquered the island of Scanza where the two Gothic peoples originated. William of Jumièges was contemporary with Adam. He finished his history in 1070, only a few years prior to Adam. The Normans of whom William of Jumièges writes have the same descent as Adam’s Northmen, they were pirates from the north who had settled in Normandy in the tenth century.<sup>51</sup> It is unlikely that Adam was influenced by William of Jumièges writing. Nevertheless it is significant that both authors, writing almost simultaneously, connect the Goths with the Northmen, and find a source of pride in this ancestry.<sup>52</sup>

Adam links Sweden with Scythia, a place connected by earlier authorities with the Goths. In Jordanes’ history of the Goths, Scythia was the place they settled after leaving the island of Scandza.<sup>53</sup> The Jewish historian Josephus calls the Goths Scythians by name and origin, for which he is rebuked by Jordanes, as to him Scandza is the place of origin of the Goths.<sup>54</sup> Scythians, an ancient people, were often negatively depicted by ancient geographers and ethnographers. They were seen as

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<sup>46</sup> AB II, Lviii.

<sup>47</sup> *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, letter from Gergorius VII to Inge and Halstan (SDHK 169).

<sup>48</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, IX.ii.89, IX, ii.27.

<sup>49</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, LX, states the Goths had lasted 2031 years, thus they predated the Romans.

<sup>50</sup> William of Jumièges, *The Gesta Normannorum ducum* of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis and Robert Torigni, Elisabeth M.C. Van Houts (ed. and tr.) 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1992) 1.2. See also Rix, *The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination: Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature*, 67.

<sup>51</sup> AB, Schol. 143.

<sup>52</sup> On Goths and Northmen see W.R. Jones, ‘The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe,’ *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13, no. 4 (1971) 376-407:404; Rix, *The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination: Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature*, 33.

<sup>53</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, IV.

<sup>54</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, IV.



irrational, treacherous and violent. Herodotus and Pliny, amongst others, depict them as cannibals, although Herodotus is not constantly negative.<sup>55</sup> Fraesdorff argues that Adam's cumulative image of the Swedes is negative because he links them with Scythians.<sup>56</sup> But, as Weidemann points out, Scythians were sometimes held up as models of justice and morality.<sup>57</sup> My thesis will argue that to Adam the Scythians represent a positive reinforcement of the values of morality and simplicity of lifestyle which he admires, as they echo that of the early Christian communities. A scholium to Adam's fourth book relates that 'the Danes, Swedes and Norwegians, and the rest of the Scythian peoples are called Hyperboreans by the Romans and are extolled by much praise by Martian [Martianus Capella].'<sup>58</sup> Here the Swedes and the other northern peoples are seen as one with the Scythians and linked with the Hyperboreans that have all the qualities of morality and piety that Adam admires. Another example when Adam calls Sweden Scythia (*Scitia*) is in the context of the missions: the peaceful death of bishop Unni at Björkö after a life preaching and converting Swedes.<sup>59</sup> It is apparent that within this context Scythia simply denotes a far-away location, claimed by the Christian church. In yet another scholium, Adam cites a poem by the Roman poet Horace (65-8 BC) in praise of the Scythians and Getae:<sup>60</sup>

Far better live the Scythians of the steppes, Whose wagons haul their homes from place  
to place,  
As is their wont; Far better live the Getae stern ...<sup>61</sup>

The Getae is another name for the Goths, the people Adam also links with the Swedes. This section of Horace's ode is descriptively called 'Destructive Wealth' and praises the lifestyle of the Getae and Scythians, their freedom and simplicity of life, unselfishness, virtue and chastity, as a contrast to the corruption and immorality of

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<sup>55</sup> Scythians as cannibals: Herodotus, *The Histories*, 4.61-62; Pliny, *NH*, 7.2; Strabo, *The Geography*, 4.5.4; Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, 167-188.

<sup>56</sup> Fraesdorff, *Der barbarische Norden*, 291-292; general characteristics: 292.

<sup>57</sup> T.E.J. Weidemann, 'Barbarians in Ammianus Marcellinus,' in I.S. Moxton, J.D. Smart and A.J. Woodman (eds.), *Past Perspectives: Studies in Greek and Roman Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 1986) 189-201:192. Peripheral peoples as just: John Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World* (New York, 1975) 17-18. For positive as well as negative sources on Scythians: Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (New York, 1965; first printed 1935) 315-344.

<sup>58</sup> Schol. 130. See Martianus Capella's *De Nuptiis*, 6.664-665.

<sup>59</sup> *AB* I, Lxii. Tschan, for unexplained reasons, translated Scythia as Sweden.

<sup>60</sup> *AB* IV, xviii.

<sup>61</sup> Schol. 122.

Rome.<sup>62</sup> Thus the Goths, Swedes and Scythians, in Adam's narrative, are associated with a virtuous lifestyle.

### **Adam, the Conversion of the North, and its Ultimate goal: Christian Salvation**

The vital issue for Adam is to extend the Christian faith to the Swedes and Norwegians who are still not converted. Like Gregory and Bede, he believes that the conversion of the last inhabited places on earth, the isles in the Ocean, will ultimately lead to the Second Coming of Christ as Christianity has then reached the physical limits of the earth. When the entire world becomes Christian, scriptural prophecies foresee the Second Coming of Christ, the Last Judgement, and the end of the world, with the inherent promise of a New Heavenly Jerusalem: eternity without pain or suffering for the faithful.<sup>63</sup>

From a Christian perspective the most important prophecy in the Bible concerns the extension of salvation to the entire world. Prefigured in the Old Testament, it is a vital issue in the New Testament. As Jennifer O'Reilly establishes, for the Jews the true faith centred on the Temple in Jerusalem, whilst non-Jewish peoples living on far-away islands were seen as pagans, worshipping powerless gods or man-made idols.<sup>64</sup> Yet prophets like Isaiah foresaw the birth of a Messiah and the salvation of the entire world, which included the gentiles.<sup>65</sup> He uses the words 'end of the earth' (*extremis terrae*) with the positive prospect of all those living on isles joining in a common praise of God: 'Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you islands, and all who live in them' (Isaiah 42:10). He also says 'Listen O isles, unto me, and hearken, ye peoples for afar' (Isaiah 49:1), words that are cited or referred to in both Adam's and Bede's work.<sup>66</sup> My reading of this citation in the context of Medieval Christian conversion, is to a large

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<sup>62</sup> Schol. 122; *Horace, Odes and Epodes*, Niall Rudd (tr. and ed.) LCL (London, 2004) Ode 3.24.

<sup>63</sup> McGinn, *Visions of the End, Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*; Caroline Walker Bynum and P. H. Freedman (eds.), *Last Things, Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2000).

<sup>64</sup> O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,' 201-227:203.

<sup>65</sup> On the importance of conversion of isles, see O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,' 201-227:203; O'Reilly, 'Islands and Idols at the Ends of the Earth: Exegesis and Conversion in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*', 119-145:128f; Scully, 'The Third Voyage of Cormac in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*,' 209-232:219f; Damian Bracken, 'Rome and the Isles: Ireland, England and the Rhetoric of Orthodoxy,' in James Graham-Campbell and Michael Ryan (eds.), *Anglo-Saxon/Irish Relations before the Vikings* (Oxford, 2009) 75-97.

<sup>66</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.29. Adam comments on this citation in *AB* I, xxvi.

extent based on O'Reilly's work.<sup>67</sup> Adam uses this citation in relation to conversion; as discussed later in this chapter.

Isaiah's words on the prospect of salvation for all nations are echoed in the New Testament, especially in Acts and Paul's letter to the Romans. In Acts, during Paul's first missionary journey, when the Jews refused to listen to their message, Paul (and Barnabas, his companion) extended their preaching to the Gentiles: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth' (Acts 13:47). In his letter to the Romans, Paul reinforces this message of Christ, relayed by the apostles: 'Their sound has gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the whole world' (Romans 10:18), which mirrors the words of the Old Testament Psalm: 'Their sound has gone forth through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun' (Psalm 19:4).

The conversion of all nations is thus important as it has eschatological implications for Christianity. Adam, like Bede and Gregory, believed he lived in the last age of this world, and foresaw the end of the world when Christianity had reached all nations, according to scripture. This Day of Judgement is prophesied in both the Old and New Testaments.<sup>68</sup> Matthew describes this event: 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory (Matthew 25:31). In Acts it is written: 'Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17.31). Bede, who wrote of the missionary period in Northumbria in the early seventh century, was 'preoccupied with the salvation of mankind.'<sup>69</sup> He interprets Rome's mission to convert Britain 'as the fulfilment of biblical prophecy concerning the conversion of remote islands and the idolatrous gentiles.'<sup>70</sup> Significantly, in a letter from Pope Vitalian (657-672) to King Oswiu (655-670) in Britain, included in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede cites Isaiah: 'Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken, ye

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<sup>67</sup> On the importance of conversion of isles, see O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,' 201-227:203; O'Reilly, 'Islands and Idols at the Ends of the Earth: Exegesis and Conversion in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*,' 119-145.

<sup>68</sup> For example Isaiah 2:12; Matthew 24:27; Acts 10:42; Romans 2:5-16; 1 Corinthians 4:5.

<sup>69</sup> Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c. 550 to c. 1307* (London, 1974) 18.

<sup>70</sup> O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,' 201-227:204.

peoples from afar,’ and explains ‘as you see, it is clearer than day that it is here foretold that not only you but also all peoples will believe in Christ the Maker of all things’ (Isaiah 49:1).<sup>71</sup> Another letter Bede cites also refers to spreading the message of Christ. Pope Boniface writes to the Northumbrian king Edwin: ‘our Saviour has bidden us to preach to all the nations, and so that the means of salvation may be put before you.’<sup>72</sup>

Adam refers to these biblical commands when praising Ansgar’s bravery in going on a mission to Sweden. Adam reminds us that what Christ said to the apostles is “‘daily addressed also to us: ‘Go ye into the whole world. And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world’” (Matthew 28:20).<sup>73</sup> This is a vital issue for Adam, as Sweden is now in the process of conversion. Likewise St Patrick, a missionary in Ireland in the fifth century, linked the conversion of Ireland—another location at the limit of the earth—with the eschatological end of the world: ‘Go forth into the world and preach the gospel to all creation’ (Mark 16:15) and ‘go and make disciples of all nations’ (Matthew 28.19).<sup>74</sup> In the fifth century St Patrick considered Ireland as the very last western island to be converted. Now, Adam perceives Sweden to be in a similar position of being the very final island in the Ocean to be converted.

Adam, like Bede and Gregory, believed the end was near.<sup>75</sup> Signs of the approaching end of time are summarised in one of Gregory the Great’s letters that Bede included in his *Ecclesiastical History*.<sup>76</sup> The letter, addressed to King Aethelberht of the English (*regi Anglorum*), praises their conversion and stresses its importance, before drawing the king’s attention to the issue:

Besides, we would wish your Majesty to know that the end of the world is at hand, as we learn from the words of Almighty God in the holy scriptures...as the end of the world approaches, many things threaten which have never happened before; there are changes in the sky and terrors from the heavens, unseasonable tempests, wars, famine,

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<sup>71</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.29.

<sup>72</sup> Bede, *HE*. 2.10.

<sup>73</sup> *AB I*, xLi.

<sup>74</sup> Patrick, *The Confession of St Patrick; and Letter to Coroticus*, John Skinner (tr. and notes, prologue John O’Donohue) (New York, 1998) 40.

<sup>75</sup> Gregory and Bede: Darby, *Bede and the End of Time*; Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity*, 238; Jane Baun, ‘Gregory’s Eschatology,’ in Bronwen Neil and Matthew Dal Santo (eds.), *A Companion to Gregory the Great* (Leiden, 2013) 157-176.

<sup>76</sup> On the letters in Bede’s *HE*: Peter Hunter Blair, *The World of Bede* (Cambridge, 1990) 58-67.

pestilence, and earthquakes in diverse places (Matthew 24:71, Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11).<sup>77</sup>

Bede, like Gregory, also reports unusual signs or portents. He writes of a terrifying sign of two comets, one towards the east, the other in the west, foretelling disasters in both east and west. Adam is familiar with Bede and he has also read Gregory's *Moralia*, where the prologue speaks of multiplying of evils 'now that the end of the world is at hand.'<sup>78</sup> Adam also writes of strange signs. To Adam 'a fearful comet... was a foretoken of the misfortunes that was about to come upon us.'<sup>79</sup> The misfortunes Adam referred to were the devastation of Hamburg by Slav uprising in 1065, and the martyrdom of John the Scot in Mecklenburg and Adalbert's fall from grace the year after. These signs are reminders that the end of the world is coming closer.<sup>80</sup> Adam, like Gregory and Bede, sees the forthcoming end of the world and the creation of a New Heavenly Jerusalem when Christian faith has spread to all nations. In Adam this is evident from his interpretation of a citation from Old Testament prophet Ezekiel, which he relates to the Goths in Sweden.

### **Adam and the Fulfilment of Ezekiel's Biblical Prophecy Leading to Salvation**

In the context of the missions to Sweden, Adam quotes a prophecy from Ezekiel which refers to Gog and Magog. For many medieval authorities Gog and Magog, peoples associated with scripture, had come to symbolise both antichrist and destructive peoples who were seen as threats to western civilisation.<sup>81</sup> In a medieval context, Gog and Magog feature on world maps, often connected to remote north eastern Scythia.<sup>82</sup> They were often presented as evil, an image that is endorsed on the Hereford and

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<sup>77</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.32.

<sup>78</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia on the Book of Job*, prologue.

<sup>79</sup> *AB* III, Li.

<sup>80</sup> Signs and portents in Bede; Darby, *Bede and the End of Time*, 97-104.

<sup>81</sup> The north as an evil place in the Bible: Jeremiah 1:14; 4:6; 6:1; 6.22; 50:3; 51:48. On Gog and Magog: Runni Andrew Anderson, *Alexander's Gate: Gog and Magog and the Inclosed Nations* (Cambridge, MA., 1932) 3-14; Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought, the Hereford Paradigm*, 184f; Peter G. Bietenholtz, *Historia and Fabula, Myths and Legends in Historical Thought from Antiquity to Modern Age* (Leiden, 1994) 121-126; Scott D. Westrem, 'Against Gog and Magog,' in Sylvia Tomasch and Sealy Gilles (eds.), *Text and Territory: Geographical Imagination and the European Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 1998) 54-75; R. K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art and Literature* (Seattle, 1981).

<sup>82</sup> An example of Gog and Magog as a subject of medieval manuscript illustration: British Library, Harley MS 4979 f. 47. The enclosed space of Gog and Magog can be seen on medieval maps, located towards the northern periphery, for example the Sawley map, Corpus Christi College, Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, ref. X.7; p. 137, plate p. 454; other maps with Gog and Magog, see ref. XIII.3 on pp. 189-190.

Ebstorf world maps; there they are represented as the evil force let loose before the Day of Judgement.<sup>83</sup> Although used on these maps to signify evil, Christensen draws the conclusion that ‘the Bible has no unambiguous definition of who or what Gog and Magog are.’<sup>84</sup> They are used loosely to describe any people that were seen as enemies of core cultures: Goths, Huns Khazars, Arabs, Turks, to mention but a few.<sup>85</sup> Westrem describes them as a ‘semantic cipher’ with a ‘capacity to assume identities’<sup>86</sup> Sometimes the line is blurred between the ‘evil’ Gog and Magog, and Magog, ancestor of the Europeans. Isidore of Seville, who linked the origin of the name Goths with Magog, the son of Japheth, explained ‘they deduce this mostly from the work of the prophet Ezekiel. Formerly, however, the learned were accustomed to call them Getae rather than Gog and Magog.’<sup>87</sup> To Isidore of Seville they are a mighty power: ‘the interpretation of their name in our language is tecti (‘protected’), which connotes strength.’<sup>88</sup> Adam follows this model; to him Gog and Magog are simply Goths; people awaiting conversion, which enables him to interpret Ezekiel’s prophecy that mentions Gog and Magog in a positive manner. Adam cites only the part that refers to Magog in particular, and connects Magog with the Goths. Stille argues that to Adam the Goths are a superior, high status people, already connected to scripture in a positive manner, and that Adam’s narrative is dominated by missionary and prophetic viewpoints.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, according to Stille, the Goths and Swedes are ‘more or less’ synonyms in a missionary context, a view shared by this thesis.<sup>90</sup> In the following citation from Adam’s narrative, they clearly represent the entire Swedish people:

And unless I am mistaken in my opinion, the prophecy of Ezechiel about Gog and Magog here appears to have been very aptly fulfilled. ‘And I will send,’ says the Lord, ‘a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell confidently in the islands.’ Some think that

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<sup>83</sup> Hereford Map: Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, p. 163, ref. 2, tr. p. 166. Ebstorf map: Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, p.152. ref. 2.3., tr. p. 158.

<sup>84</sup> Christensen, *Cassiodorus*, 46.

<sup>85</sup> Westrem, ‘Against Gog and Magog,’ 54-75:57; Bietenholtz, *Historia and Fabula*, 126; Anderson, *Alexander’s Gate, Gog and Magog and the Inclosed Nations*, 8.

<sup>86</sup> Westrem, ‘Against Gog and Magog,’ 54-75:55.

<sup>87</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, IX.ii.89, IX, ii.27; Isidore of Seville, *History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi*, Guido Donini and Gordon B. Ford Jr. (tr. and intro.) (Leiden, 1970) 1.

<sup>88</sup> Isidore of Seville, *History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi*, Guido Donini and Gordon B. Ford Jr. (tr. and intro.) 2.

<sup>89</sup> Stille, ‘Adam av Bremens användande av termen goter,’ 104-107.

<sup>90</sup> Stille, ‘Adam av Bremens användande av termen goter,’ 104-107: 106. For the links between Swedes and Goths see also Nils Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World-System in the European North (AD 1075-1225)* (Leiden, 2005) 584-586; Nyberg, ‘Stad, skrift och stift,’ 295-339:314f.

this and similar sayings were spoken about the Goths who captured Rome. When, however, we consider the fact that the Gothic peoples rule in Sweden and that all this region is dispersed in islands scattered far and wide, we are of the opinion that the prophecy can be applied to them especially since the prophets made many predictions which as yet do not appear to have been fulfilled.<sup>91</sup>

Unlike Adam's reading, not all interpretations relating to Gog and Magog and the Goths are benign. In the late fourth century Bishop Ambrose of Milan suggested that Gog is synonymous with the Goths because of the similarity in the names.<sup>92</sup> Ambrose explains that Gog of whom Ezekiel has spoken is the same as the Goths that are invading the Roman Empire in the fourth century. He regards the Goths as evil and foresees their overthrow.<sup>93</sup> It is likely that Adam refers to Ambrose, whose work he is familiar with (as seen in the first chapter of this thesis), when he tells us that 'this and similar sayings were spoken about the Goths that captured Rome.'<sup>94</sup>

Other Christian authorities contemporaneous with Ambrose were more neutral towards these same Goths. Orosius' narrative seeks to demonstrate that things were a lot worse before the empire became Christian. He tells us the Goths wanted to do no harm, they only desired land to settle.<sup>95</sup> Unlike Ambrose he did not equate the Goths with Gog. To him the Goths were not the enemy but fellow men who ought to be converted to the orthodox Roman faith as they were Arians and thus heretics.<sup>96</sup> Adam treats the Norwegians of the previous centuries, when they plundered and ravaged Europe, in a similar manner. He argues that they are not evil but that necessity has forced them into plundering: 'Poverty has forced them thus to go all over the world

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<sup>91</sup> AB I, xxvi; quote from Ezekiel 39:6.

<sup>92</sup> Ambrose, *Exposition of the Christian Faith (Le fide)*, H. and E. de Romestin and H.T.F. Duckworth (tr.), NPNF Vol. 10 (Buffalo, 1896) II.16.137.

<sup>93</sup> 'Prophesy, therefore, Son of Man, and say: O Gog, thus saith the Lord—Shalt thou not, in that day when My people Israel shall be established to dwell in peace, rise up and come forth from thy place, from the far north, and many nations with thee, all riders upon horses, a great and mighty gathering, and the valour of many hosts? Yea, go up against my people Israel, as clouds to cover the land, in the last days,' Ambrose, *Exposition of the Christian faith (Le fide)*, II.16.137.

<sup>94</sup> AB I, xxvi.

<sup>95</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos*, 1.16. On Orosius' benign view of the Goths, see Gillian Clark, 'Augustine and the Merciful Barbarians,' in Ralph W. Mathisen. and Danuta Shanzer (eds.), *Romans, Barbarians and the Transformation of the Roman World: Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity in Late Antiquity* (University of Illinois, 2005) 33-42:37.

<sup>96</sup> When asked for missionaries, Emperor Valens 'with fatal perverseness, sent them teachers of the Arian doctrine,' Orosius, *Hist. adv. paganos*, 7.33. See also Christensen, *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths*, 42.

and from piratical raids they bring home in great abundance the riches of the lands. In this way they bear the unfruitfulness of their own country.’<sup>97</sup> This has now changed. Adam reassures us that ‘since accepting Christianity [the Norwegians]...have already learned to love the truth and peace, and to be content with their poverty.’<sup>98</sup> Both Orosius and Adam clearly have sympathy for the motives that drive a people to plundering and colonising. It also demonstrates the *topos* of barbarians softened by conversion: it changes their character, from warlike to peaceful.

Augustine, who had instructed Orosius to write a ‘history against the pagans,’ did not see the Goths in the role of the scriptural evil peoples of the north either.<sup>99</sup> Augustine, like Orosius, wants to show that Christianity is not to blame for the assault on the empire or the recent sack of Rome by the Goths. He too shows that things were not better before the advent of Christianity. Augustine points out that although the Goths sacked Rome they respected the churches as sanctuaries, and neither looted nor killed those seeking shelter inside.<sup>100</sup> Thus Adam’s view of the Goths as benign is supported by authorities like Orosius and Augustine.

When Adam writes that the prophecy of Ezekiel has been fulfilled, an understanding of the context is essential: Ansgar’s second mission to convert Sweden. Bishop Gauzbert declined to go on account of the danger but Ansgar did not hesitate and went on what Adam describes as a perilous journey north to Björkö, the city of the Goths in Lake Mälaren.<sup>101</sup> Ansgar was well received and got permission from King Olaf to build a church and ‘everyone was given leave to be baptized.’<sup>102</sup> Ansgar left a priest at Björkö and returned to Bremen, the mission completed. It is when Adam relates the fruitful conclusion of Ansgar’s mission that he tells us that Ezekiel’s prophecy has been fulfilled.<sup>103</sup> It is clear that he refers to Ansgar’s success. Adam then cites the prophecy: ‘And I will send, says the Lord, a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell confidently in the islands’ (Ezekiel 39:6). Sending a fire symbolises sending Christian missions to these peoples in the north and refers to their conversion. Gregory the Great

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<sup>97</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

<sup>98</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

<sup>99</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos*, preface.

<sup>100</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 1.1.

<sup>101</sup> AB I, xxvi.

<sup>102</sup> AB I, xxvi.

<sup>103</sup> AB I, xxvi.



tells us: ‘God is said to be fire because He kindles with the flames with his love the minds he fills.’<sup>104</sup> He explains fire as a symbol of God when commenting on a citation from Ezekiel that speaks of a menace from the north:

And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire (Ezekiel 1-4).

In his commentary on this text, Gregory connects the whirlwind with the Second Coming of Christ.<sup>105</sup> When Gregory explains this quote he speaks of the north as a home for evil spirits, a place where the devil takes possession of the peoples’ cold hearts. The cold hearts refer to ‘pagans,’ but God has power even over the cold human souls of the north, as Gregory explains, and faith in God will melt their hearts:

For when, at the Lord’s command, the cold wind recedes, the warm wind takes possession of the hearts of the faithful, he who blows through the garden of God, i.e. the Holy Church, so that reports of virtues flow out like spices for the knowledge of many. Indeed, as the north wind, namely the evil spirit, recedes, the Holy Spirit, like the south wind, refreshes the mind. When He has blown with his warmth, spices of virtues at once flow from the hearts of the faithful.<sup>106</sup>

The fire then is God, melting the icy hearts of the peoples of the north, making them Christians. Less than a century after Adam, Helmold of Bosau (1120-1177), describing the conversion of the Slavs, Danes and Northmen, wrote that the heat of God’s word from Hamburg-Bremen melted the icy cold of the north.<sup>107</sup> Gregory’s reader Bede makes use of the same symbolism of fire melting the frozen hearts of ‘pagan’ north. In the *Ecclesiastical History*’s copy of a letter from Pope Boniface to King Edwin in relation to English conversion, Boniface writes that it has pleased God ‘in His mercy and loving kindness to all creation to melt, by the fire of His Holy spirit, the frozen hearts of races even in the far corners of the earth to knowledge of Himself.’<sup>108</sup> Like

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<sup>104</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homilies of St Gregory the Great on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, T. Gray (tr.) 1.8.28.

<sup>105</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homilies of St Gregory the Great on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, T. Gray (tr.), 1.2.16.

<sup>106</sup> Gregory the Great, *Homilies of St Gregory the Great on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, T. Gray (tr.), 1.2.9.

<sup>107</sup> ‘*Nam Hammemburgensis ecclesiae pontificum instantia disseminatum est verbum Dei in omnes Slavorum, Danorum sive Northmannorum populos et dissolutum est gelidum illud frigus aquilonis a calore verbi Dei*,’ Helmold of Bosau, *Helmoldi presbyteri bozoviensis chronica slavorum*, Bernhard Schmeidler (ed.), 1.4. Bosau is a short distance north of Hamburg.

<sup>108</sup> Bede, *HE*. 2.10; Scully, ‘Location and Occupation: Bede, Gildas and the Roman Vision of Britain,’ 243-272:256.

Bede, the sixth century British historian Gildas uses the symbolism of the sun and its warmth to describe the conversion of Britain. ‘Meanwhile, to an island numb with chill ice and far removed, as in a remote nook of the world, from the visible sun, Christ made a present off his rays (that is his precepts).’<sup>109</sup> Here we also can note the *topos* of remote islands in the northern Ocean, now receiving the faith. It is this idea of God’s spirit melting the hardened people—symbolising Christian conversion of the north—that Adam refers to in his citation when he speaks of the prophecy being fulfilled.<sup>110</sup>

Adam believes that Ezekiel’s prophecy relates to the Goths: he points out that many predictions in the Bible have not yet been fulfilled. The connection between Ezekiel’s prophecy and the Goths is made on the basis that both people concerned live on islands. Ezekiel speaks of ‘them that dwell in the islands’ and to Adam the Goths’ region ‘is dispersed in islands scattered far and wide.’<sup>111</sup> Adam’s view of the Goths as living on islands may be influenced by Rimbert’s words on Ansgar’s missionary journey in the *Life of Ansgar*. For Adam, Rimbert is a trusted authority, he was hailed as an ideal bishop, as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis. When speaking about his mission to Sweden Rimbert cites Isaiah 49:1: ‘Hear O islands’ (‘Listen O Isles’) because, as he tells us, ‘almost all that country consisted of islands.’<sup>112</sup> Like Bede, Rimbert and Adam identifies the isles of which Isaiah writes with his own regions.<sup>113</sup> Rimbert further explains that ‘in the north the end of the world lay in Swedish territory.’<sup>114</sup> He recalls how, before Ansgar’s journey to the north, a prophet—Adalhard, the former abbot of Corbie—spoke to him in a vision:

I have given thee to be a light to the Gentiles that thou mayest be unto them salvation even to the end of the earth. Kings shall see and princes shall rise up together and they shall worship the Lord thy God, even the Holy One of Israel, for life shall glorify thee’ (Isaiah 49:5-7).<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, M. Winterbottom (ed. and tr.) 8.

<sup>110</sup> Bietenholtz, *Historia and Fabula*, 126.

<sup>111</sup> *AB I*, xxvi.

<sup>112</sup> Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii*, xxv.

<sup>113</sup> ‘*Audite Insulae*,’ Is. 49:1; ‘*convertendas dedi te in lucem gentium ut sis salus mea usque ad extremum terrae*’ (I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth) (Isaiah 49:6).

<sup>114</sup> Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii* xxv.

<sup>115</sup> Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii* xxv.

This citation from Isaiah is also present in Vitalian's letter, as cited by Bede.<sup>116</sup> We can conclude that Adam, like Bede, interprets biblical prophecy regarding the conversion of the isles in the Ocean as relating to the island locations of which they write. Ansgar's vision before his journey does not appear in Adam's account, yet he is certainly familiar with the vision and its implication of extending the conversion to the ends of the earth: he understands the prophecy of Ezekiel as having a similar meaning. Adam sees the same fulfilment of prophecy now when Christianity is reaching the north.

This fulfilment of prophesy regarding the conversion of the north is reinforced at the very end of Adam's narrative. Here Adam tells his readers that Christianity now has come to the limits of the earth:

That exceedingly fierce race of the Danes, of the Norwegians, or of the Swedes which, in the words of blessed Gregory, 'knew nothing else but in barbarism to gnash its teeth, has long since learned to intone Alleluia in the praise of God.'<sup>117</sup>

The prophecy of Ezekiel here has come to its fulfilment. Adam is using the words of Bede, who quotes Gregory's words on the conversion of Britain. Bede wrote of the exemplary life of Gregory in his *Ecclesiastical History*. Included among Gregory's good deeds, is that he sent a mission to the English. It is when describing this mission that Bede writes of its success, quoting the words of Gregory but applying them specifically to the English:

Lo, the mouth of Britain, which once only knew how to gnash its barbarous teeth, has long since learned to sing the praises of God with the alleluia of the Hebrews.<sup>118</sup>

Using Bede's quote from Gregory, Adam has replaced the Britain and the English with the Danes, Norwegians and Swedes to tell us that they have now become Christian. Like the Britain and the English in Bede, they have learned to intone alleluia, which refers to praising God.<sup>119</sup> In the words of O'Reilly: 'singing God's praise was a comprehensive description of the service due to him, the antithesis of the service of

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<sup>116</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.29.

<sup>117</sup> *AB* IV, xLiv; St Gregory, *Moralia on the Book of Job* (Vol. 3) 27.21.

<sup>118</sup> Bede, *HE*. 2.1.

<sup>119</sup> O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,' 201-227:208.

idols.’<sup>120</sup> Serving idols, as we saw in the previous chapter, is ‘pagan’ behaviour; we also saw how Adam tentatively linked idolatry symbolically with his own archbishop’s behaviour. Singing ‘alleluia’ is what Christians do: it recalls an episode in Bede when the Christian Britons are attacked by Picts and Saxons, the ancestors of the English. Bishop Germanus led the men into the battle, ordering the men to shout out alleluia on his command, whereupon the enemy was ‘smitten by dread’ and fled.<sup>121</sup> Significantly, the word is also connected to the Apocalypse, as it is used by ‘a great voice of much people in heaven’ singing in praise of the Second Coming of Christ (Revelation 19). Alleluia is then a powerful word linked with both praising God and the salvation of mankind, which, as Adam tells us, will be used by the Northmen.

Adam—and Bede and Gregory—states that before learning to intone alleluia, peoples knew nothing but gnash their teeth. In biblical terms gnashing of teeth points to the torments of hell.<sup>122</sup> In these cases Adam, like Gregory and Bede, is referring to the speech of a barbarian i.e. a ‘pagan.’ As Gillingham explains, for Latin writers the word barbarian was often a synonym for pagan.<sup>123</sup> Adam also uses this term when he writes of the people who inhabit the rugged mountainous regions of Norway: ‘in speaking to one another [they] are said to gnash their teeth rather than to utter words.’<sup>124</sup> When people are Christian they no longer gnash their teeth like savages or beasts but sing the praises of God and become truly human and rational. When Adam speaks of the Norwegians in the mountainous regions who lack articulate speech, they are reminiscent of monstrous beings, like the Cynocephali (men with dog’s heads), who populate the very fringes of the earth. Adam writes about Cynocephali who bark rather than utter words.<sup>125</sup> The polytheists and the ‘monstrous’ beings have one thing in common: they are awaiting conversion, which will bring them into the Christian community.

Adam writes that ‘with universal acclaim everyone proclaims the name of Christ.’<sup>126</sup> The Norsemen, described in the early chapters of Adam’s narrative as plundering and

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<sup>120</sup> O’Reilly, ‘The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,’ 201-227:208.

<sup>121</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.20.

<sup>122</sup> For example: Psalm 112:10; Matthew 8:12; 13:42; 13:50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28.

<sup>123</sup> Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 10; Jones, ‘The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe,’ 376-407:388.

<sup>124</sup> *AB* IV, xxxii.

<sup>125</sup> *AB* IV, xix.

<sup>126</sup> *AB* IV, xLiv.

devastating Gaul and Saxony, are now peaceful—they have become Christians. They are content to ‘say with the Apostle, ‘For we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come’’ (Hebrews 13.14), a reference to the heavenly city, the paradise to come. Seeking a ‘lasting city’ also echoes Augustine’s *City of God*. To Adam this means that the fulfilment of prophesy must be very near. Adam ends his narrative with a confluence of citations or references from the Bible and from Gregory the Great.

From the rising and from the setting of the sun, from the north and from the sea, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise, and ‘every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the Glory of God the Father,’ with the Holy Ghost, living and reigning forever and ever. Amen.<sup>127</sup>

The reference to the rising and the setting sun may be a reference to Psalm 113:3: ‘From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the Lord’s name is to be praised,’ but it is also a citation from Malachi regarding conversion from polytheism:

For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts (Malachi 1:11).

Here again Adam may be inspired by Bede; the letter from Boniface to Edwin that Bede cites in the *Ecclesiastical History*, uses the same symbolism of the rising and the setting sun, related to conversion of the far corners of the earth.<sup>128</sup> For Bede, as for Adam, the rising and setting sun denote universality. Both Bede and Adam relate the words to the remote islands in the Ocean: they are both involved in, and supporting, the spreading of Christianity. Adam thus ends his history by urging all peoples to join the Christian faith. When he tells us that ‘every tongue’ should confess to the faith (Philippians 2:11), he evokes the message of Pentecost which epitomises the missionary and universal character of the Christian church: it also emphasises the importance of speech in order to spread the Christian message.

Now, in Adam’s view, Christianity has reached the farthest northern region of the world. The citation from Philippians is from a chapter which summarises Christ’s message: ‘let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let

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<sup>127</sup> *AB* IV, xLiv. Adam is citing Philippians 2:11.

<sup>128</sup> Bede, *HE*. 2.10.

each esteem other better than themselves; look not every man on his own things, but every man also the things of others' (Philippians 2:2-4). This is the ideal that Adam strives for.

When Adam echoes the words of Bede he makes a connection to the same ideas that are apparent in Bede's work, the promise of salvation of mankind. Bede also ended his ecclesiastical history with a reference to world salvation when he cited lines from Psalm 96: 'Let the earth rejoice in His perpetual kingdom and let Britain rejoice in His faith and let the multitude of isles be glad.'<sup>129</sup> For Bede the reference to the multitude of isles was an allusion to Britain and its wider archipelago. Adam now includes Sweden and Norway in this multitude of isles that have a reason to rejoice. The very last line of Adam's narrative, 'with the Holy Ghost, living and reigning forever and ever. Amen,' is from Gregory the Great's *Homilies on the Book of Ezekiel*.<sup>130</sup> Gregory wrote these homilies at a turbulent time, when the only partly converted Lombards invaded and settled northern Italy; cities were destroyed and there was plague. Gregory thought that these were the events that Christ had foretold in his description of the end of the world.<sup>131</sup> Thus the very words of Gregory have an apocalyptic context. We can also see that Adam pays homage to a man who embodies his ideal.

Adam's words at the very end of his narrative also link with the very last line of its prologue where he urges bishop Liemar, the new bishop of Hamburg-Bremen, to 'preach in all the length and breadth of the North, speedily accomplish that which of old your predecessors vigorously undertook in respect of conversion of the heathens.'<sup>132</sup> Conversion—and continuing inner conversion among Christians, implementing the lifestyle of the early Christian church—is the most important message in Bede's and in Adam's narratives. Conversion will lead to the fulfilment of Ezekiel's prophesy of Christianity coming to its conclusion, with the consequence of the Second Coming of Christ and a New Heavenly Jerusalem. This influences Adam's depiction of the Swedes and Norwegians; he portrays the Swedes and Norwegians of

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<sup>129</sup> Bede *HE*. 5.23. See O'Reilly, 'The Multitudes of Isles and the Corner-Stone,' 201-227:205f.

<sup>130</sup> *AB* IV, xLiv. Gregory the Great, *Homilies of St Gregory the Great on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, T. Gray (tr.) 1.2.21.

<sup>131</sup> G.R. Evans, *The Thought of Gregory the Great* (Cambridge, 1986) 19. The preface of Book II of Gregory's *Homilies to Ezekiel* mentions the king of the Lombards having crossed the river Po.

<sup>132</sup> *AB*, prologue.

his own era as pious and already living in the manner of the early church, untainted by corrupt civilisation, thus the perfect people through which prophecy will be fulfilled.

### **Adam's Depiction of Swedes and Norwegians of his Own Era**

How does Adam describe the Swedes and Norwegians whose conversion are of such importance for salvation of mankind? Adam tells us they are physically strong: the Swedes are 'excelling in strength and arms, besides being the best fighters on horse as well as on ships.'<sup>133</sup> Norwegians too are 'valiant fighters.'<sup>134</sup> As strong and valiant fighters we can assume the Swedes and Norwegians have bodies to match. In ancient narratives a person from northern regions often has a physique to be admired, or wondered at.<sup>135</sup> Sidonius, a fifth-century bishop in Gaul, was in awe of the size of the Goths. He complained of the difficulty of composing poetry 'surrounded by seven foot tall barbarians with hair reeking of rancid butter.'<sup>136</sup> Isidore of Seville tells us that the Goths are 'a brave and most powerful people, tall and massive in body.'<sup>137</sup> Adam follows the same ancient and medieval stereotype regarding peoples from a cold climate when he speaks of the strength of the Swedes and Norwegians.<sup>138</sup> A scholium added to Adam's work relates that people in Hälsingland, a location Adam believes to be in the vicinity of the Rhiphaean mountains, are 'hardened by the cold,' which may reflect their spiritual condition as polytheists but may also be a reference to their physical bodies.<sup>139</sup> As he continues to tell us that they do not 'care about the shelter of their houses and make use of the flesh of wild animals for food and their pelts for clothing,' it may also be read as a classical depiction of a barbarian people.<sup>140</sup>

Adam gives his reader very little idea of the Swedes' and Norwegians' apparel. By not addressing the issue he avoids leaving his readers with a visual image of a stereotypical uncouth barbarian. In the classical period the representation of a barbarian on the

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<sup>133</sup> AB IV, xxii.

<sup>134</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

<sup>135</sup> Hippocrates, *Airs, Water, Places*, W.H.S. Jones (tr.), xxiv. Discussion on Hippocrates climate theories in: Woolf, *Tales of the Barbarians*, 44-47. See also Friedman, 'Monsters and the Earth's Imagined Corners,' 41-64:52; Debra Hassig [Debra Higgs Strickland] 'Iconography of Rejection: Jews and Other Monstrous Races,' in Colum Hourihane (ed.), *Image and Belief* (Princeton, 1999) 25-46:25:26-28.

<sup>136</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carmina*, W.B. Anderson (tr.), 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA., 1915) 12.6-11.

<sup>137</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, IX. xxiii.89.

<sup>138</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 143; Rix, *The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination: Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature*, 50-79.

<sup>139</sup> AB Schol. 137.

<sup>140</sup> AB Schol. 137.

fringes of the world offered a stark contrast to the image of the neatly shaved Romans in their woven and carefully draped clothes. The stereotype ancient barbarian had long and unkempt hair and beard and clothes made of skins or even vegetation. The Roman would see the outward appearance of the barbarian as a reflection of their presumed lack of control and rationality in contrast to their own neat exterior, which was seen as a mirror of a well-balanced and rational mind.<sup>141</sup> However, the barbarian disregard for fine clothes is not always regarded as a negative trait, but can be held up as an example of freedom from vanity and materialism.

Adam avoids describing the dress and hair of the Swedes, the markers that would specifically show their barbarian status, thus not tainting the Swedes with the image of a wild barbarian. The only item of clothing that Adam mentions in relation to the Swedes are skins (furs), but these are not worn by the Swedes. These skins are used by the Swedes for trade to foreign countries where they are considered luxuries; the Swedes themselves do not care for them. Adam states that the Swedes 'regard as nothing every means of vainglory; that is, gold, silver, stately chargers, beaver and marten pelts, which makes us lose our minds admiring them.'<sup>142</sup> In these words Adam conveys the Swedes' dislike of ostentatious display; they prefer a life of simplicity and do not care for luxury. We have seen this uninterest in material things in the early church, in Bede's depiction as well as in Adam's admiration for the apostolic church. Neither does Adam go into detail of how the Norwegians dress. He only tells us briefly that they use 'wool for clothing.'<sup>143</sup> This remark does not conjure up a negative image but refers to the lifestyle of the Norwegians, which will be discussed later. This lack of interest in material things follows the ideals of the early church, as well as the classical ideas of the noble barbarian.

Classical sources, like Tacitus (56-117 AD), portray barbarians as pure and untainted by what was regarded as the corrupting influence of civilisation. Tacitus holds up the lives of the Germans as a contrast to the loose morals and soft living in Rome. In Germany men value strength and valour and women live modest lives without

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<sup>141</sup> Peter Heather, 'The Barbarian in Late Antiquity, Image, reality and transformation,' in Richard Miles (ed.), *Constructing Identities in Late Antiquity* (London and New York, 1999) 234-255: 236f

<sup>142</sup> *AB* IV, xxi.

<sup>143</sup> *AB* IV, xxxi.



temptations like plays or banquets.<sup>144</sup> Adam depicts the Swedes of his era in the same mode, as evident by their lack of interest in material goods.<sup>145</sup> Tacitus is probably not known to Adam, but Adam recounts ideas on the purity of the Germanic race—they do not marry outside their own people—which are also described in Tacitus.<sup>146</sup> The Norwegians and the Icelanders are also living the same frugal and simple lives. The Norwegians had, according to Adam, been forced into piracy on account of the barrenness of their land. Now that they are Christians they are also ‘the most continent of all mortals, with all diligence prizing frugality and modesty, both as to their food and to their morals.’<sup>147</sup>

Adam describes the Icelanders as modest and frugal in the same manner as the Norwegians. The Icelanders are described as living from raising cattle, making clothes out of skins and sharing their abode with the cattle.<sup>148</sup> This lifestyle Adam praises as:

Passing their lives thus in holy simplicity, because they seek nothing more than what nature affords...For instead of towns they have mountains and springs as their delights...they have many meritorious customs in common, especially charity, in consequence of which they have all things in common with strangers as well as with natives.<sup>149</sup>

As with the Norwegians we see this idealised image of the good and pious barbarian. The lifestyle also resembles that of the apostolic church: their lack of materialism, their charity and having things in common which we have seen described by Bede in his portrayal of Aidan in Northumberland and the missions of Augustine in England.

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<sup>144</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, 18-19. Emilia Ndiaye, ‘L’altérité du ‘barbare’ german: instrumentalisation rhétorique de barbarus chez Césaire et Tacite,’ *Le barbare: image phobiques et réflexions sur l’altérité dans la culture européenne* (Berne, 2008) 46-66. On the barbarians’ freedom from luxury and corruption, see also Rix, *The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination: Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature*, 35.

<sup>145</sup> On Adam’s admiration of the quality of moderation, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 142. On the noble savage in antiquity: Lovejoy and Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, 287-367; Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World*, 16-22; Henri Baudet, *Paradise on Earth: Some Thoughts on European Images of non-European Man* (New Haven, 1965) 56-58.

<sup>146</sup> On Tacitus being generally unknown in this era, see Nyberg, ‘Stad, skrift och stift, några historiska inledningsfrågor,’ 295-339: 312. Adam cites words similar to those in Tacitus’ *Germania*, 4 in *AB I*, vi. Timothy Bolton claims that Adam draws material from Tacitus’ *Germania*, 9-10: Timothy Bolton, ‘A Textual Historical Response to Adam of Bremen’s Witness to the Activities of the Uppsala-Cult,’ in Gro Steinsland (ed.), *Transformasjoner i Vikingtid og Norrøn Middelalder* (Oslo, 2006) 61-92. Bartlett also finds that Adam uses parts of Tacitus’ *Germania*, but indirectly, cited from an intermediate source. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 143.

<sup>147</sup> *AB IV*, xxxi.

<sup>148</sup> *AB IV*, xxxvi.

<sup>149</sup> *AB IV*, xxxvi.

This simplicity of lifestyle of the Swedes, Norwegians and the Icelanders is a contrast to Adam's own bishop Adalbert's fondness of excess. Adalbert, we are told, thought he was Greek by descent, and copied the Greeks in dress and deportment.<sup>150</sup> When Adam uses the word 'Greek,' he means the Eastern Roman Empire, Byzantium, an image of excess and splendour, a stereotype of what was seen as the decadent East. On occasion Adalbert's fondness of splendour resulted in his failing to follow Roman rites regarding church offices. Instead he used Greek rites or else invented his own with the help of scripture; Adam is uncertain which. Whilst Adam disapproves of this excess he is at pains to point out that Adalbert did nothing 'without the sanction of the scriptures.'<sup>151</sup> It is one of Adam's ambiguous moments when he realises that his reproach of Adalbert might be taken as a criticism of the church of Hamburg-Bremen, and therefore tempers his critique. However, Adalbert's Byzantine excess is a contrast to the simplicity and lack of interest in the material world that is Adam's ideal, and which is exemplified by the Swedes and other northern peoples.

The only negative barbarian stereotype that Adam applies to the Swedes—the Norwegians are not mentioned in this matter—is their excessive sexual appetite, but even here the criticism is restrained. It clearly disturbs Adam that the Swedish men are excessive in their relationships with women. He writes that:

Only in their sexual relations with women do they know no bounds, a man according to his means has two or three or more wives at one time, rich men and princes an unlimited number.<sup>152</sup>

This is a common classical and medieval charge regarding barbarian peoples. The typical barbarian is not content with one wife but has several, or they have their wives in common. Sallust tells us that marriage ties do not count for much with Numidians and Moors and that each has as many wives as he can afford, ten or more are quite usual, and kings have a proportionately larger number.<sup>153</sup> Julius Caesar stated of the Britons that 'groups of ten or twelve men share their wives in common.'<sup>154</sup> Dio Cassius

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<sup>150</sup> On Adalbert's fondness of excess in religious rites, *AB* III, xxvii. Splendour in dress indicated by imitating the Greek style; *AB* III, xxxii.

<sup>151</sup> *AB* III, xxvii.

<sup>152</sup> *AB* IV, xxi.

<sup>153</sup> Sallust, *The War Against Jugurtha*, 80.6.

<sup>154</sup> Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, H.J. Edwards (tr.), LCL (Cambridge, MA., 1966) 5.14.

(150-235 AD), a Roman senator and historian, reinforces Julius Caesar's view, telling his readers that Britons 'share their womenfolk.'<sup>155</sup> The Father of the Church, Jerome (347-420), describes the Irish as sharing women in a similar manner.<sup>156</sup> But not all barbarians have these characteristics. Tacitus' Germans, as a contrast, are not morally lax, they have one wife and adultery, or clandestine relationships, are rare: an adulterous woman is punished with expulsion from her home, and from society.<sup>157</sup>

The sexual excess is the sole negative barbarian characteristic that Adam admits that the Swedish people possess.<sup>158</sup> However, immediately after disapproving of the boundless sexual appetite of the Swedes in one single sentence, Adam lessens the effect of his words by telling his readers that in other matters regarding sexual mores they are very strict. He tells us that the law is very severe on adulterers, rapists or on crimes against a person or his possessions, which are punished by death.<sup>159</sup> Thus he restores the image of morale and discipline. Adam disapproves of the vice of sexual excess but, unlike Gerald's representation of the sin of the Irish, the Swedes do not suffer God's punishment for these sins. Nor does Adam go into any detail of this sexual excess except in the above sentence. It appears as if he does not wish to tarnish the image of the Swedes.

### **Adam and the Pastoral Lifestyle and Social Organisation in Sweden and Norway**

Adam represents the Swedes and Norwegians as living as pastoralists off their flocks. Keeping herds indicates a mobile lifestyle, reminiscent of the barbarian in ancient narratives who lived from the produce of the herd, unlike the Romans who cultivated the soil. Tillage, the cultivation of grain, made it possible for the population to stay in one place; it gave birth to cities and civilisations.<sup>160</sup> Areas with cities and tillage became wealthy and powerful, whilst the peripheries were usually poorer and often dependant on the former. The words core and periphery are often used by economists,

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<sup>155</sup> Dio Cassius, *Dio's Roman History*, Ernest Cary and Herbert Baldwin Foster (tr.) LCL (London and New York, 1914) 77.12.

<sup>156</sup> Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum*, Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.) W.H. Fremantle, G. Lewis and W.G. Martley (tr.) NPNF Second Series, Vol. 6. (Buffalo, 1893) 2.7; Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 99.

<sup>157</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, 18.

<sup>158</sup> On the immorality of the Swedes in Adam, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 140.

<sup>159</sup> *AB* IV, xxi.

<sup>160</sup> Marc Van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East, ca. 3000-323 BC* (Malden, MA., 2004) 11. Cities as markers of civilisation: John Patrick Montaña, *The Roots of English Colonialism in Ireland* (Cambridge, 2011) 6.

sociologists and geographers to distinguish between the regions of power and wealth and the poorer peripheries, as Bartlett explains.<sup>161</sup> Many of these marginal regions had little or no tillage but were used only for pastoral farming.<sup>162</sup> In the Middle Ages the centre of Europe (the Mediterranean region, Gaul and the southern parts of Germany) was a core region; it was urban, productive and had a higher standard of living than the periphery which was less urbanised and less productive.<sup>163</sup> Sweden, Norway, as well as Ireland were seen as marginalised, peripheral, unproductive, pastoral areas.

Whilst Adam does not specify the food of the Swedes and Norwegians, he does mention that they kept herds of cattle. For Adam the pastoral lifestyle of the Swedes and Norwegians is praiseworthy and presented in a positive manner. When Adam tells us that the Swedes are ‘excelling all others in cattle raising’ the sentence does not give any negative association.<sup>164</sup> His choice of words implies that he is impressed that the Swedes are the very best at raising cattle. In Norway too there are herds of cattle.<sup>165</sup> Here milk-drinking—in the classical period generally regarded with scorn as a barbarian practise—is mentioned.

Making a living of herds from herds of animals as well as drinking milk are traits of the barbarian.<sup>166</sup> In Homer’s *Odyssey* the giant Polyphemos, who lives in a cave and herds his goats by day and drinks milk, is also a cannibal; a vivid contrast to the civilised Greek way of life.<sup>167</sup> On the other hand, in Homer’s *Iliad*, Zeus looks north to ‘the noble mare-milkers and the milk drinking Abioi, the most righteous of men.’<sup>168</sup> This illustrates the duality in the view of barbarians in classical literature; they are described in a negative as well as positive manner. In Virgil’s *Georgics* a barbarian

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<sup>161</sup> Robert Bartlett, ‘Heartland and Border: The Mental and Physical Geography of Medieval Europe,’ in Huw Price and John Watts (eds.), *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies* (Oxford, 2007) 23-36:24.

<sup>162</sup> Bartlett, ‘Heartland and Border,’ 23-36:27.

<sup>163</sup> Bartlett, ‘Heartland and Border,’ 23-36:24. See also J. R. S. Phillips, ‘The Outer World of the European Middle Ages,’ in Stuart B. Schwarz (ed.), *Implicit Understandings, Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, 1994) 23-63:50f.

<sup>164</sup> AB IV, xxi.

<sup>165</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

<sup>166</sup> On barbarian diet: Larissa Bonfante, ‘Classical and Barbarian,’ in Larissa Bonfante (ed.), *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe, Realities and Interactions* (Cambridge, 2011) 1-36:22-23.

<sup>167</sup> Homer, *The Odyssey*, IX. On the inhospitable ways of the Cyclopes: François Hartog, *Memories of Odysseus: Frontier Tales from Ancient Greece* (Chicago, 2001) 25; Richard Bernheimer, *Wild men in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA., 1952) 86; René Hodot and Patrick Jouin, ‘Barbares, barbarismes et barbarie dans le monde gréco-romain,’ in Jean Schillinger and Philippe Alexandre, (eds.), *Le barbare: image phobiques et réflexions sur l’altérité dans la culture européenne* (Berne, 2008) 25-45:27.

<sup>168</sup> Homer, *Illiad*, E.V. Rieu (tr.) (London, 1950) XIII, 3f.

‘quaffs milk/With horse-blood curdled.’<sup>169</sup> Other barbarians live on what their herds and flocks produce and what is found in nature. Dio Cassius describes the Caledonians and the Maeatae as inhabiting wild and waterless mountains and desolate swampy plains where they possess neither walls nor cities nor tilled fields but live on their flocks, wild game and certain fruits.<sup>170</sup> Julius Caesar tells us that the inland Britons ‘for the most part do not plant corn-crops, but live on milk and meat,’ then goes on to paint an image of a warlike and brutal people.<sup>171</sup>

Adam draws no negative conclusion from the Norwegian milk drinking, or herd keeping, but instead chooses to make biblical associations: ‘in many places in Norway and Sweden cattle herdsmen are even men of the highest station, living in the manner of the patriarchs and by the work of their own hands.’<sup>172</sup> By mentioning the patriarchs he draws the readers’ attention to the Old Testament where the patriarchs were the founding fathers of the Jewish people; the most important of these were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Although Old Testament characters, these were important figures for Christians as patristic authors sought to tie in the New Testament with the Old, by seeing events, or people, in the Old Testament as prefigurations of the New Testament.<sup>173</sup> Therefore, although the patriarchs lived before the advent of Christ, they were regarded as having done the groundwork so that the Christian faith could flourish. In the words of Augustine:

in all their [the patriarchs] labours there is a prophesy of Christ, and for that reason they were sowers...therefore was the harvest now ready in Judea... [many] brought the price of their goods and, laying them at the apostles feet, having eased their shoulders of their worldly baggage, began to follow the Lord Christ.’<sup>174</sup>

When Adam likens the Norwegians and Swedes to the men who laid the groundwork for Christianity this can only be seen as praise. He continues the biblical theme, this time speaking solely of the Norwegians:

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<sup>169</sup> Virgil, *Georgics*, H.R. Fairclough (tr.), LCL (Cambridge, MA., 1916) III, 440.

<sup>170</sup> Dio Cassius, *Dio’s Roman History*, 77. 12.

<sup>171</sup> Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, 5.14.

<sup>172</sup> *AB* IV, xxxii.

<sup>173</sup> Miner (ed.), *Literary Uses of Typology, from the late Middle Ages to the Present*, preface, ix.

<sup>174</sup> Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of St John*, John Gibb (tr.) 15.32.

They browse their cattle, like the Arabs, far off in the solitudes. (*Quorum armenta ritu Arabum longe in desertis stabulant.*) In this way do the people make a living from their livestock by using the milk of the flocks or herds for food and the wool for clothing.<sup>175</sup>

Whilst Arabs in this era were considered heretics, enemies of God, Adam's reference to Arabs reflects a biblical image of pastoralism.<sup>176</sup> Importantly they are also one of the peoples mentioned as being present at Pentecost (Acts 2.11), indicating they are all potential Christians. The word Adam uses regarding the barren regions of Norway is *desertis*, desert, above translated as solitudes. For Christianity the desert is seen as a place of spiritual birth and renewal.<sup>177</sup> Here we clearly see how the Old Testament foreshadows the new: Moses in the Old Testament goes out in the wilderness seeking God, Christ does the same in the New Testament.<sup>178</sup> John the Baptist is significantly described as the voice crying in the wilderness, urging mankind to make straight the way of the Lord, an event prophesied by Isaiah in the Old Testament.<sup>179</sup> This tradition of seeking solitude continued with St Anthony who inspired secluded monastic settlements.<sup>180</sup> For Greek and Latin authors the desert became a 'place for profound change and a place for spiritual hopes and progress.'<sup>181</sup> The people who thus withdrew from the world did so to live for God alone, without the temptations or the material wealth of the world; they lived in isolation from the world, alone or in monastic settlements. This lifestyle is exemplified by several monks and bishops in Bede, for example Aidan, who used to retire to Farne Island 'to pray in solitude and silence.'<sup>182</sup> Cuthbert, a monk and bishop of Lindisfarne, went to live 'a hermit's life of contemplation,' in a place that Bede describes as barren and ill-suited for human habitation.<sup>183</sup> Cuthbert supported himself with the work of his

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<sup>175</sup> AB IV, xxxi; *Adam Bremensis*, IV, xxxi.

<sup>176</sup> On the Muslims as enemies, see Hassig, 'Iconography of Rejection,' 25-46:35. For the image of pastoralism, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 133.

<sup>177</sup> Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, *Geography*, 17.

<sup>178</sup> Moses: Exodus 4:27-28; Jesus: Matt. 14:22-24; Luke 5:16.

<sup>179</sup> Isaiah 40:3; John 1:22-24; Mark 1:3; Matthew. 3:3.

<sup>180</sup> *Vita Antonii; Life of Antony*, H. Ellershaw (tr.), NPNF Second Series, Vol. 4, Philip Schaff and Jeremy Wace (eds.) (Buffalo, 1892). On early monasticism: William Harmless, *Desert Christians: an Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (Oxford, 2004); Marilyn Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism: from the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2000); James E. Goehring, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg, 1999).

<sup>181</sup> Darlene L. Brooks Hedstrom, 'Redrawing a Portrait of Egyptian Monasticism,' in David Blanks, Michael Frassetto and Amy Livingstone (eds.), *Medieval Monks and their World: Ideas and Realities: Studies in Honour of Richard E. Sullivan* (Leiden, 2006) 11-34:13.

<sup>182</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.16.

<sup>183</sup> Bede, *HE*. 4.28.

hands, just like Adam's Norwegians.<sup>184</sup> So did two Irishmen in Bede: Fursa, who stayed with the hermit Ultán, and with him 'lived in austerity and prayer, labouring daily with his hands.'<sup>185</sup> Thus Adam's portrayal of the Norwegians has common ground with Bede's hermits. When using the term *desertum* and drawing the reader's attention to the patriarchs of the Old Testament, Adam evokes the original people of God, austerity and monasticism, which is also a reminder of the communal living of the early Christian church. In the quote above Adam also compares the Norwegians to Arabs. Arabs in the Bible are both enemies and tribute-givers.<sup>186</sup> They are named among those nations that God's spirit descended to at Pentecost.<sup>187</sup> Now it is the Norwegians that get to hear God's words. In Adam's narrative, the Norwegians evoke the idea of spiritual living.

Adam also portrays social organisation in Sweden in a flattering light. He gives the reader a positive impression of kingship and an orderly society. When Adam speaks of the Swedish king, he implies one people under one ruler. The kings are important but do not have the ultimate say in the running of the country, as they have to ask the assembly for approval:

nevertheless, the power of these kings depends upon the will of the people, for what all in common approve, that the king must confirm, unless it be that his decision, which they sometimes reluctantly follow, seems preferable. And so they enjoy equality at home (*itaque domi pares esse*).<sup>188</sup>

What Adam describes is an organised society where people have a say in the decision making. This vision of equality amongst subjects and the limited power of the kings are described in the *Life of Ansgar* from which Adam cites regarding the missions to the north. Adam tells us how Ansgar is 'kindly received' by King Björn and allowed to set up a mission, after discussing the matter with advisors who all gave their consent.<sup>189</sup> The wording in the *Life of Ansgar* is similar to Adam's: the king discussed the matter and 'with the approval and consent of all granted permission.'<sup>190</sup> In this

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<sup>184</sup> Bede, *HE*, 4.28.

<sup>185</sup> Bede, *HE*, 3.19.

<sup>186</sup> Arabians as enemies see 2 Chronicles 26:7; Nehemiah 4:7; as givers of tribute: 2 Chronicles 9:14; 2 Chronicles 17:11.

<sup>187</sup> Acts 2: 2-11.

<sup>188</sup> *AB* IV, xxii.

<sup>189</sup> *AB* I, xv.

<sup>190</sup> Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii*, xi.

particular case Adam's positive view of the organisation of society in Sweden is inspired by Rimbert's account. The impression is of a peaceful society with a king who defers to the common good.

### **Adam and the Northmen as Hyperboreans; an Ideal People**

To reinforce the positive characteristics of the Northmen, Adam links them with Hyperboreans, a people from classical narrative. The name would immediately tell the learned medieval reader something about the characteristics of this people: it evokes an image of simplicity and contentment, piety and uninterest in material things, characteristics that recall Adam's ideal of living: the early apostolic Church. Using the words of Einhard Adam explains that the Northmen are Hyperboreans:

The Danes and Swedes and the other peoples beyond Norway are all called Northmen by the historians of the Franks, although Roman writers named men of this kind Hyperboreans, whom Martianus Capella extolled with many commendations.<sup>191</sup>

In many classical texts we find that the Hyperboreans live long lives without illness, strife or enmity. For instance, Pindar (fifth century BC) tells us 'no sickness or ruinous old age is mixed into that sacred race; without toil or battles they live without fear of Nemesis.'<sup>192</sup> Herodotus speaks of the piety of the Hyperboreans.<sup>193</sup> Pliny states that discord and illness is unknown amongst them.<sup>194</sup> To Martianus Capella, they are 'a people remarkable for their customs, length of life, manner of worship, benignity of climate, six-month-long day, and their abode at the limit of human habitation.'<sup>195</sup> Solinus speaks of the long life of the Hyperboreans, who, when their life is over, adorn themselves in garlands and quite happily throw themselves over a cliff.<sup>196</sup> Adam, although familiar with Solinus, is silent on the matter of suicide as this constitutes a

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<sup>191</sup> AB IV, xii.

<sup>192</sup> Pindar, *Pythian Odes*, John Sandys (tr.) 10.25-45.

<sup>193</sup> On the Hyperboreans' link with the shrines of Apollo in Delphi and Delos, see Herodotus, *The Histories*, 4.32-35. See also Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 60-67.

<sup>194</sup> Pliny, *NH*, 4.26. Pliny is mentioned in Scholio 149.

<sup>195</sup> Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*, 6.664.

<sup>196</sup> Solinus cited from the Hereford map: 'The Hyperboreans, as Solinus says, are a most blessed race, for they live without discord and grief, which they do as long as they wish. When they tire of living they throw themselves into the sea from a designated rock, judging this to be the best kind of burial,' Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, Hereford map, X.12, reference to text on Hyperboreans, p. 164, ref. 9. Translation p. 167. This legend is also found in Pliny, *NH*, 4.26.



sin. Specifically, Adam tells us that ‘although all the Hyperboreans are noted for their hospitality, our Swedes are so in particular.’<sup>197</sup> When using the word Hyperboreans for Northmen, Adam implies that they have the same character traits as this people from ancient narratives.<sup>198</sup> Thus the very name Adam uses for the Northmen implies their suitability for conversion.

### **Adam’s Ideals of Conversion: a Response to Bede and Gregory the Great**

Conversion is yet another area where Adam is significantly influenced by Gregory the Great and Bede. His ideals of conversion are similar to Bede’s and Gregory’s: they all believe in conversion by persuasion and example. Bede was writing when the English had quite recently completed conversion to Christianity. When Adam was writing, the Christianisation of Sweden and Norway was, according to him, still on-going, having started more than two hundred years earlier. In reality the conversion in Sweden was relatively peaceful, and lengthy.<sup>199</sup> Swedish kings, backed by the decisions of local assemblies, allowed conversion and the building of churches in the region.<sup>200</sup> For Adam this is ideal: conversion should not be forced, but carried out peacefully, with bishops living as examples for their flocks, as discussed in the first chapter. A perfect example of conversion is Adam’s story of Egino’s conversion of Bornholm, an island between Sweden and Denmark. Egino moved the population to tears when preaching there. They manifested sorrow for their errors and immediately tore down their idols and ‘of their own accord hastened to be baptized.’<sup>201</sup> Egino persuaded the population to embrace Christianity not only with words, but by setting an example of Christian charity: when the people laid their possessions at the feet of the bishop, he refused their offerings but taught them to build churches, help the needy and use the money to ransom captives.

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<sup>197</sup> AB IV, xxi.

<sup>198</sup> Hospitality as a trait of Swedes in Adam and Helmold of Bosau, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 141f.

<sup>199</sup> Anders Winroth, *The Conversion of Scandinavia: Vikings, Merchants, and Missionaries in the Remaking of Northern Europe* (Yale, 2012); Nora Berend (ed.), *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus’ c. 900-1200*; Bertil Nilson (ed.), *Kristnandet i Sverige: gamla källor och nya perspektiv* (Uppsala, 1996). For the eastern influence on the conversion of Sweden, see Henrik Janson (ed.), *Från Bysans till Norden, östliga kyrkoinfluenser under vikingatid och tidig medeltid* (Skellefteå, 2005);

<sup>200</sup> Winroth, *The Conversion of Scandinavia*, 8-9.

<sup>201</sup> AB IV, viii.

Just like Gregory, and Bede, Adam sees the introduction of Christianity as a slow process which involves more than a superficial change. In a letter to bishop Mellitus, transcribed in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Gregory explains that pagans cannot make the giant leap to Christianity instantly, but need to go step by step.<sup>202</sup> Gregory's advice is to adopt something from their own rituals in order to make this transition easier for them. As they are used to sacrificing oxen to their gods, Gregory suggests that they could, on the consecration of a Christian church, celebrate with religious feasting, killing cattle and glorify God with a feast.<sup>203</sup> This way they would have some outward gratification, and would more easily consent to the inward joys of Christianity. We see the same step by step guiding of polytheists to Christian faith in the advice of Bishop Aidan, also recounted by Bede, in the context of a council regarding the conversion of the people of Northumbria. King Oswald was disappointed that the first bishop sent to them by the Irish was of a harsh disposition and had not been able to convert his people. Aidan tells this bishop that he had been too severe on unlearned hearers; he advises that at first he must 'give them the milk of simpler teaching.'<sup>204</sup> Aidan explains what he means: they should by degrees be nourished by the word of God until they 'were capable of receiving more elaborate instruction.'<sup>205</sup> It recalls the Apostle Peter's advice: 'as new-born babies, desire the milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby' (1 Peter 2:2). Adam appears to adhere to this view when he backs away from violent destruction and holds up the peaceful examples of Egino's persuasion as an ideal.

In contrast to 'example' and persuasion is the violent destruction of temples or idols by missionaries, which Adam sees with abhorrence. Adam disapproves of a planned destruction of a temple in Uppsala.<sup>206</sup> Zealous missionaries Adalward and Egino (less committed to peaceful persuasion in this particular story) intended to go in secret to

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<sup>202</sup> Bede *HE*. 1.30.

<sup>203</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.30.

<sup>204</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.5. On Bede's ideology of preaching, see Lawrence T. Martin, 'Bede and Preaching,' in Scott DeGregorio (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bede* (Cambridge, 2010) 156-169.

<sup>205</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.5.

<sup>206</sup> *AB* IV, xxx. Often supposed to be a 'pagan' stronghold based on Adam's description, this image has been challenged lately: Janson, *Templum Nobilissimum*; Bertil Nilson (ed.) *Kristnandet i Sverige: gamla källor och nya perspektiv*; Anders Hultgård, 'Från Ögonvittnes skildring till retorik, Adam av Bremens notiser om Uppsala Kulturen i religionshistorisk belysning,' in Anders Hultgård (ed.), *Uppsala och Adam av Bremen* (Falun, 1997) 9-50. Winroth, *The Conversion of Scandinavia*, 148, sees the Temple as a figment of Adam's imagination, based on borrowings from earlier literature; there is no evidence for a temple at Uppsala, in fact the region abounds in rune stones with Christian motifs from this period.

this temple to cause its destruction. The reasoning behind the plan was that once the temple was destroyed conversion to Christianity would follow.<sup>207</sup> Adam seemed glad that this plan was averted by the Swedish king Stenkil who ‘shrewdly kept them from such an undertaking.’<sup>208</sup> Stenkil heard rumours of the plan and put a stop to it as it would put his own position as a Christian king, and Christianity, in jeopardy. As the king explained, this action would only cause a ‘relapse into paganism,’ as had happened in the Slav countries.<sup>209</sup> It is clear that Adam shares the opinion of the king, when he calls him shrewd. Conversion by force or conversion followed by destruction is not ideal; as it does not change the mind-set of the polytheists.

Rather than burning or destroying the polytheists’ temples the alternative was to convert the buildings to churches. This was the advice given by Gregory the Great, as transcribed by Bede in his history. In the same letter to bishop Mellitus, Gregory explained that ‘the idol temples of that race should by no means be destroyed, but only the idols in them.’<sup>210</sup> Gregory suggested that:

if the shrines are well built, it is essential that they should be changed from the worship of devils to the service of the true God. When this people see that their shrines are not destroyed they will be able to banish error from their hearts and be more ready to come to the places they are familiar with, but now recognizing and worshipping the true God.<sup>211</sup>

By citing Gregory’s letters of advice, Bede shows that he shares his views. Adam has read Bede and would have known that reconverting a temple into a church was an option. It is possible that this is another reason for Adam to be against the destruction of the Uppsala temple. However, whilst Bede thinks it important to circulate Gregory’s ideas by transcribing many of his letters regarding conversion, and, in this case, clearly advocating the reuse of polytheists’ buildings, Bede also gives an example where he seems to support the destruction of a temple. He tells us how Coifi, the high priest in Northumbria under Edwin converted to Christianity, desecrated the temple and had it

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<sup>207</sup> *AB IV*, xxx.

<sup>208</sup> *AB IV*, xxx.

<sup>209</sup> *AB IV*, xxx.

<sup>210</sup> Bede *HE*. 1.30.

<sup>211</sup> Bede *HE*. 1.30.

burned down.<sup>212</sup> Here the situation is different, as the destruction is done by a recent convert, and not by a missionary bishop forcing his view on the polytheists. Coifi's actions seem to Bede praiseworthy; he was a former pagan who, on his own accord, decided to destroy idols and burn the temple, thus sending a clear signal that the polytheist faith had failed. Adam may have had both these examples in mind when relating the story of the aborted mission to burn the temple at Uppsala. Destruction of idols and temples should be done by the polytheists themselves and not by missionaries, whereas the possibility of reusing what Adam describes as an impressive building must have been an option.

Communication and preaching, rather than violence, is the key to a successful conversion. Adam stresses that conversion is best done by those who know the customs and language of the nation in question. Archbishop Adalbert, Adam tells us, planned to follow in the footsteps of Ansgar and Rimbert and travel north to preach. Adam mentions how the Danish king, Svein Estridsson, dissuaded Adalbert from this venture. Svein, whom Adam calls 'prudent,' told Adalbert that 'barbarian peoples could be more readily converted by men like them in language and custom than by persons unacquainted with their ways and strange to their kind.'<sup>213</sup> By calling Svein prudent, Adam clearly agrees with this statement. The preacher should be able to relate to the audience, and the audience to the preacher. The best missionaries to the north are those born in those countries; they are able to behave sensibly and carefully, taking into account the cultural differences.

Here again, Bede may have provided a model; he shows us examples of the consequences of a bishop being unable to speak the language of his flock. We find how the English King Oswald sends for a bishop from Iona.<sup>214</sup> The Irishman Aidan was chosen because of his gentle disposition to instruct the English in religion. Aidan was not 'completely at home in the English tongue,' however, in this case it did not present a problem: the king's solution was to act as interpreter himself as he knew Irish from his period of exile.<sup>215</sup> 'It was indeed a beautiful sight,' Bede tells us, 'when the bishop was preaching the gospel, to see the king acting as interpreter of the heavenly

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<sup>212</sup> Bede *HE*. 2.13.

<sup>213</sup> *AB* III, Lxxii.

<sup>214</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.3.

<sup>215</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.3.

word for his ealdormen and thegns.<sup>216</sup> In this manner the king also added his own authority to the message of faith. Bede reports that after Aidan's arrival, many more clerics came from Ireland and the mission thrived. In contrast to the success of the royal interpreter, Bede also tells us of Agilbert, in another story which illustrates the importance of the priest being understood. Agilbert was from Gaul but had trained in Ireland and was for many years bishop to King Cenwealh of the Saxons. Although Agilbert was thought of as industrious and hardworking, the king, who only spoke his own language 'got tired of his [the bishop's] barbarous speech' and found another bishop who spoke his own language.<sup>217</sup> Being able to understand the message of faith in words was clearly important in the process of conversion.

In regard to apostates, Adam and Bede also seem to be in accord. Adam regards polytheists as innocent as they cannot be blamed for not knowing of Christ since they have not received instruction in the Christian faith. On the other hand, when converted, a Christian cannot behave like a polytheist, or turn to their gods. When Adam describes the rites at the festival at Uppsala what distresses him most is that 'those that have already adopted Christianity redeem themselves through these ceremonies.'<sup>218</sup> To be Christian and apostate is worse than being polytheist; it means you have experienced the faith and rejected it. In this case ignorance of the faith cannot be an excuse.

Bede was also severe on those that turned away from the faith. We have an example of this when the newly converted King Redwald was 'perverted from the sincerity of faith, so that his last state was worse than his first.'<sup>219</sup> The reference to the man's later state being worse than the former is a citation from scripture, where a man who has been cleansed by Christ 'taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first' (Luke 11:26). Bede tells us that Redwald was 'noble by birth though ignoble in his deeds.'<sup>220</sup> He is the absolute contrast to Fursa, 'a man of very noble Irish race, but still nobler in spirit than by birth.'<sup>221</sup> Fursa, we are told, 'devoted all his energy to the study

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<sup>216</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.3. Martin, 'Bede and Preaching,' 156-169: 161.

<sup>217</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.7. On Bede and Preaching, see Martin, 'Bede and Preaching,' 156-169.

<sup>218</sup> *AB* IV, xxvii.

<sup>219</sup> Bede, *HE*. 2.15. On Redwald's conversion as a political decision, see Henry Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1972; reprint 1991) 65f.

<sup>220</sup> Bede, *HE*. 2.15.

<sup>221</sup> Bede, *HE*. 3.19.

of sacred books and to the monastic discipline.<sup>222</sup> This is the ideal of Bede as well as Adam. Reverting to polytheism, on the other hand, is a great sin, for both Adam and Bede.

### **Adam and the Partial Failure of the Swedish Mission**

For the missions to flourish they need good pastors. In Adam's account we find that the partial failure of the Swedish mission is blamed directly on the priests. If the people are still polytheists in some places in Sweden and Norway, they cannot help it; it is the fault of bad priests. Adam relates that the people in Sweden 'perhaps they might readily be persuaded of our faith by preaching but for bad teachers who, in seeking 'their own; not the things that are Jesus Christ's,' give scandal to those whom they could save (Philippians 2.21).'<sup>223</sup> Adam gives us several examples of these bishops, who care about their own material comfort and ignore the work they were called upon to do; for instance, Henry, Bishop of Lund (d. 1066), who drank until he 'suffocated and burst,' a reference to Judas in Acts 1:18.<sup>224</sup> Adam tells us that some of the bishops consecrated for bishoprics in Sweden did not even bother to visit their dioceses. Acilin was not, according to Adam, worthy of the episcopal title as he did not travel to his bishopric in Sweden: he 'loved carnal ease. In vain did the Goths send a legation, for until his death he stayed with his pleasures at Cologne.'<sup>225</sup> Tadico too, 'out of love for his belly preferred even to starve at home rather than be an apostle abroad.'<sup>226</sup>

For Adam, another problem damaging the process of conversion is the avarice of the priests. Adam tells us that the Swedes would 'cherish with great affection preachers of the truth, if they are chaste, prudent and capable.'<sup>227</sup> Here Adam indicates that the people of Sweden are capable of discerning the good from the bad prelate and will only cherish one who is good. Bad priests are not just a problem in Sweden but a

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<sup>222</sup> Bede, *HE*, 3.19.

<sup>223</sup> *AB* IV, xxi.

<sup>224</sup> *AB* IV, viii. For the bad priests on the Scandinavian mission, see Lesley Abrams, 'Eleventh Century Missions and Scandinavia,' in Christopher Harper-Bill (ed.), *Proceedings of the Battle Conference 1994* (Woodbridge 1995) 21-40:31:32.

<sup>225</sup> *AB* IV, xxiii.

<sup>226</sup> *AB* IV, xxx.

<sup>227</sup> *AB* IV, xxi.

general problem of the northern region. Holy offices, Adam tells us, are ‘all dearly paid for among them [the Norwegians] and by the Danes. This, I think, proceeds from the avarice of the priests.’<sup>228</sup> Adam connects avarice with simony, the selling of church offices, an issue that was important for the reform movement. Although he admits that some Northmen refuse to pay tithes, or are ignorant in this matter, they are also ‘fleeced for other offices that ought to be rendered for nothing. For even the visitation of the sick and the burial of the dead—everything there has a price.’<sup>229</sup>

This avaricious collecting of money by the clerics is contrary to the teachings of Christ and slows down the conversion process. This also happened in the areas to the east of Germany. The Danish king Svein told Adam that the Slav people would have converted long ago but for the avarice of the Saxons who were more interested in collecting tribute than in conversion.<sup>230</sup> This contrast between ideal and reality is also evident in Bede. In his letter to Egbert, Bede reinforces the importance of living in an unmaterialistic way, indeed, as he tells us ‘it is certainly commanded by God to sell what you own and give alms’ and ‘unless he has renounced all that he possess, he cannot be my disciple’ (Luke 12:33, Luke 14:33).<sup>231</sup> Adam, like Bede, finds the collecting of possessions reprehensible.

To Adam the ‘excellent moral character’ of the Swedes and Norwegians is ‘corrupted only by priestly avarice.’<sup>232</sup> Here we can note that the moral character of the northern peoples is held up as superior to the priests. Indeed, it is the outside influence of the priests that serves to corrupt the excellent moral character of the hitherto unspoilt peoples. This is the ancient *topos* of the noble barbarian. A representative example of this view in Christian historiography and polemics is Salvian, a Christian writer of the fifth century, who claimed the superiority of the barbarians in contrast to the evil corruption of his own society in Gaul. He wrote *On the Government of God* at a period when the Goths were invading the Roman Empire, and argued that although both Romans and barbarians commit sins and are wicked, the sins of the Romans are in many respects more blameworthy as they know Christian doctrine whereas the

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<sup>228</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

<sup>229</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

<sup>230</sup> AB III, xxiii.

<sup>231</sup> Bede, Letter to Egbert, Dorothy Whitelock (ed.), *English Historical Documents c. 500-1042*, 735-45:744.

<sup>232</sup> AB IV, xxxi.

barbarians are ignorant of it.<sup>233</sup> Unlike the Romans their actions are not in contempt of divine rules; thus, according to Salvian, the Christians are more sinful than the polytheists. Although probably not familiar with Salvian, Adam has read Orosius, who shares Salvian's approach.

Adam, like Bede, shows us that for missions to succeed they must be led by men who live an exemplary life, the ideal of balancing contemplative and active lives, a conviction that Thacker suggests runs through all Bede's work.<sup>234</sup> Bede's bishop Aidan taught nothing that he did not practise himself, 'neither sought after nor cared for worldly possessions' but distributed among the poor what was given to him.<sup>235</sup> In Bede, both the mission of Augustine in the south and that by Aidan in the north had been led by men who were examples for the whole community. Adam echoes Bede and holds up Ansgar and Rimbert as models, as we saw in the first chapter of this thesis. In Adam we also meet Adalward the Elder (d. 1064) who was sent from Bremen to the bishopric of Skara in Sweden: 'by his holy living and by his good teaching he is said to have drawn a great multitude of heathen to the Christian faith.'<sup>236</sup> Bede's and Adam's ideal pastors are men with similar qualities of humility and virtue, teaching by example. All these men were successful in their missions. For Adam the present situation in Sweden is less fortunate. There are no bishops of this calibre in Sweden, nor is Adalbert the leader that Adam looks for. He is hoping that the new bishop, Liemar, will be like the heroic bishops of the past.

### **Adam and Religious Life in Norway: a Triumph for Christianity**

It is in Norway, a country to which the influence of Hamburg-Bremen did not stretch, where Adam notes the biggest progress of Christianity.<sup>237</sup> This in itself must be seen as a huge criticism of Hamburg-Bremen's feeble missionary activity in Sweden in Adam's own day. In contrast to Sweden, Norway had been blessed with a saint, King Olaf (995-1030).<sup>238</sup> Adam tells us that Olaf converted in England, returned to Norway

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<sup>233</sup> Salvian, *On the Government of God*, Eva Sanford (tr.) (New York, 1930), for example in 5.2-3; Jones, 'The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe,' 376-407:384.

<sup>234</sup> Thacker, 'Bede's Ideal of Reform,' 130-153:132.

<sup>235</sup> Bede, *HE*, 3.5.

<sup>236</sup> *AB IV*, xxiii.

<sup>237</sup> *AB IV*, xxxi.

<sup>238</sup> On king Olav, see Sverre Bagge, *From Viking Stronghold to Christian Kingdom: State Formation in Norway c 900-1350* (Copenhagen, 2010) 29f.



to regain his throne and to spread Christianity, bringing with him many bishops and priests.<sup>239</sup> Adam represents Olaf as a true Christian king. The ‘most blessed king Olaf’ banished soothsayers, augers, sorcerers and enchanter from Norway in order that ‘the Christian religion might take firmer root in his kingdom.’<sup>240</sup> Whilst the saintly King Olaf banished the soothsayers, Adam described with great disgust that the court of the Archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen, was brim-full of the same and that the archbishop encouraged these peoples.<sup>241</sup> Adalbert, the Christian archbishop with the advantages of education and instruction in faith, behaved like a pagan whilst the newly converted Olaf, a barbarian from the north, is depicted as a true Christian. Proof of Olaf’s strong faith came shortly after his death when miracles started happening at his grave. As Adam reports: ‘the Lord by the numerous miracles and cures done through him deigns to declare what merit is his in heaven who is thus glorified on earth.’<sup>242</sup> Trondheim (Nidaros), where Olaf was buried, became a place of pilgrimage ‘worthily recalled with eternal veneration on the part of all the peoples of the Northern Ocean.’<sup>243</sup> Adam tells us that Trondheim is now graced with many churches and is frequented by ‘a great multitude of peoples.’<sup>244</sup> The peoples of Norway were now incorporated into Christianity. Whilst Rome and Jerusalem would always be the places which gave birth to Christianity and brought it to fruition, the north now had its own saint and its own site for pilgrimage.

### **Gerald of Wales and the Irish**

This part of the chapter deals with Gerald and the Irish. In order to justify the conquest and colonisation of Ireland, Gerald’s representation of the Irish resurrects a classical image of its people as savage barbarians. Ancient narratives had been consistently hostile towards the Irish. However, several centuries before Gerald wrote his account this image had been replaced by a different representation: that of the Irish as saints and scholars.<sup>245</sup> After the introduction of Christianity in the fifth century, Ireland

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<sup>239</sup> *AB* II, xxxvi. The bishops were Siegfried, Grimkil, Rudolf and Bernhard, *AB* II, Lvii.

<sup>240</sup> *AB* II, Lvii.

<sup>241</sup> *AB* III, Lxiii.

<sup>242</sup> *AB* II, Lxi.

<sup>243</sup> *AB* II, Lxi.

<sup>244</sup> *AB* IV, xxxiii.

<sup>245</sup> Hostility against the Irish in ancient accounts: Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*; John T. Koch and John Carey, *The Celtic Heroic Age: Literary Sources for Ancient Celtic Europe and Early Ireland and Wales*

became known as a centre of learning, famous for its schools and the piety of its monks.<sup>246</sup> Bede endorsed the positive image of the Irish in his *Ecclesiastical History*.<sup>247</sup> Gerald was familiar with Bede and this positive image of the Irish. He also knew that the Irish church had been reformed. His description of the Irish church as un-reformed serves his political agenda as a representative of the colonising power.<sup>248</sup> By depicting the Irish as morally reprehensible, as well as socially and culturally primitive, he reverts to an ancient negative stereotype of the barbarian.<sup>249</sup>

Following the same structure as in the earlier part of this chapter on Adam, this section starts with a discussion on names and origins, important indicators of a nation's status or standing. It argues that Gerald uses the names and origins of the Irish to support English territorial claims. The discussion continues with an examination of Gerald's ideals of pastoral care. Both Adam and Gerald have reform agendas which significantly affect the way they represent their respective peoples; here we will see how Gerald's view of reform and his perception of the Irish church influences his depiction of the Irish people. Gerald's views on pastoral care are to some extent similar to those of Adam, Bede and Gregory the Great. But rather than advocating the balance between spiritual and active lives endorsed by those authorities, Gerald stresses the importance of clergy leading an active life and correcting the vices of their flocks. According to Gerald, the priests in Ireland have failed in this matter; he depicts the church as unreformed and the Irish living in moral decay. He chooses to ignore that the Irish reform is celebrated in Bernard of Clairvaux's *Life of Malachy*, although this

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(Aberystwyth, 2005); Scully 'At World's End: Scotland and Ireland in the Graeco-Roman Imagination,' 164-170; Killeen, 'Ireland in the Greek and Roman Writers,' 207-215; David, 'Looking East and West,' 38,

<sup>246</sup> Dáibhí O'Crónín, *Early Medieval Ireland 400-1200* (London, 1995) 196-229; D. Ó Corráin, *Ireland before the Normans* (Dublin, 1972); D. Whitelock, R. Ketterick, and D. Dumville, (eds.), *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1982); Kathleen Hughes, *Early Christian Ireland: Introduction to the Sources* (Cambridge, 2008); Kathleen Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (London, 1966).

<sup>247</sup> Bede and the Irish: Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 55-57; Nicholas John Higham, *(Re-)reading Bede: The Ecclesiastical History in Context* (London, New York, 2006) 134-142; Alan T. Thacker, 'Bede and the Irish,' in L.A.J.R. Houwen and Alasdair Andrew MacDonald (eds.), *Beda Venerabilis: Historian, Monk and Northumbrian* (Groningen, 1996) 31-61; Scully, 'Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux's *Life of Malachy*: Representation and Context,' 239-256; 246; Diarmuid Scully, 'Gens innoxia: The Irish in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum*,' Unpublished paper from Claremorris conference 'Mayo and the Saxons,' 1996; David, 'Looking East and West,' 45.

<sup>248</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 140.

<sup>249</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 145. See also, for example, Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200*, 192; Montañó, *The Roots of English Colonialism in Ireland* (Cambridge, 2011) 32-37; Knight, 'Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles,' 55-86; James F. Lydon, 'Nation and Race in Medieval Ireland,' in Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson and Alan V. Murray (eds.), *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages* (Leeds, 1995) 103-124.

is a work known to Gerald.<sup>250</sup> Following Scully's research, this thesis explores similarities in the characterisation of the Irish and the Irish church in the *Life of Malachy* and Gerald's *Topography*.<sup>251</sup> Gerald's views of the Irish as unreformed and sinners, informed by an ancient negative model of the barbarian, is a subject of much scholarly discussion.<sup>252</sup> This ancient model affects all aspects of Gerald's depictions, from appearance and character to way of life and social organization. The pastoral lifestyle, which Adam so admired in the Swedes and Norwegians, is to Gerald a sign of the barbarity of the Irish. In contrast to the reverence shown by Gerald to King Henry of England, the Irish kings are portrayed as insignificant, their kingship rites ridiculed as barbaric and outlandish and Irish social organisation as unstable as a result of the barbarism.

### Gerald and the Names of Ireland and the Irish People

Gerald represents the Irish as a people inhabiting an island that he calls *Hibernia*. *Hibernia* was the commonly used Latin name for Ireland from Julius Caesar's time until the Middle Ages and beyond.<sup>253</sup> The ancient Greeks called Ireland *Ierne*, a name linked with the Celtic *Iverio*, which ultimately transformed into *Hibernia*.<sup>254</sup> The name evokes wintry, stormy and cold conditions, appropriate for its perceived geographical location.<sup>255</sup> Ancient writers made this connection between location and climate; Strabo, for instance, saw Ireland as such an inhospitable, marginally inhabitable place.<sup>256</sup> Isidore of Seville speculated that *Hibernia* was so called because of its proximity to Iberia (*Hiberia*), suggesting a connection between the two places bordering the Ocean.<sup>257</sup> Another name that Latin sources use for the inhabitants of

<sup>250</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.).

<sup>251</sup> Scully, 'Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of Malachy,' 239-256.

<sup>252</sup> W. R. Jones, 'England against the Celtic Fringe: A Study in Cultural Stereotypes,' *Journal of World History/Cahier d'Histoire Mondiale* 13 (1971) 155-171:159-60; Scully, 'Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,' 49-62; Scully, 'At World's End: Scotland and Ireland in the Graeco-Roman Imagination,' 164-170:167-168; Scully, 'Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of Malachy,' 239-256:249-250.

<sup>253</sup> Julius Caesar, *Gallie War*, 5.13.

<sup>254</sup> John T. Koch (ed.), *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, 2006) 915.

<sup>255</sup> *hibernus*, wintry, *hibernum*, winter, Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*, online at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=hibernus&la=la&can=hibernus0#lexicon>. See Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 37.

<sup>256</sup> Strabo, *Geography*, 1.4.4., 2.1.13. See also Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 40, 42.

<sup>257</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.6. See also John T. Koch, *An Atlas for Celtic Studies* (Oxford, 2007) 18; Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 37; Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 36.

Ireland is *Scotti/Scoti*.<sup>258</sup> *Scotia* is synonymous with *Hibernia*, as Isidore of Seville explains.<sup>259</sup> The *Scoti*, the Irish people, colonised the northern region of Britain from the third century AD in several waves of settlement and by the ninth century had become the dominant people there; thereafter the region became known as *Scotia*—now Scotland.<sup>260</sup> In *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, Scota is an Egyptian princess who marries an ancestor of the Irish and thus gave her name to the people.<sup>261</sup> When Gerald uses the word *Scoti* he refers to the people of Irish origin who settled in Scotland.<sup>262</sup> The names are confusing as the *Scoti* for a period could be either Irish or Scottish.<sup>263</sup> We can see this in Adam's work. In Adam's narrative John, a priest who was a good friend of Adalbert, is called *Iohannem Scotum*.<sup>264</sup> Tschan has chosen to translate this as 'John the Scot.' Considering that Adam tells us that Ireland is inhabited by *Scoti* it should possibly be John the Irishman. Adam uses *Scoti*, *Hibernia* and Ireland, all in one sentence: 'Hibernia, [is] the fatherland of the Scots, which is now called Ireland (*Irland*)'<sup>265</sup> His source is not acknowledged. The name Ireland is derived from the inhabitants' own name for their country, *Ériu*.<sup>266</sup> Adam calling Ireland by this name is unusual.<sup>267</sup> The *Annalista Saxo* (1148-1152) also states that *Hibernia* is now called Ireland but the Danish writer Saxo Grammaticus (c. 1150-1215) uses the word *Hibernia* for Ireland.<sup>268</sup>

Gerald too applies the Latin name *Hibernia* to Ireland, following the established mode. Like Isidore of Seville, Gerald points to a connection to Spain. Gerald relates that 'according to some' the word *Hiberniensis* comes from Heberus, an Irish king of ancient date whose family originated in Spain.<sup>269</sup> When he writes 'according to some'

<sup>258</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. paganos*. 1.2; Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum*, 2.7; Scully, 'Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of Malachy: Representation and Context,' 239-256:246.

<sup>259</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIV.vi.6.

<sup>260</sup> Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 91-92.

<sup>261</sup> *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, R.A. Stewart Macalister (ed.) 14.

<sup>262</sup> *Top.* 91.

<sup>263</sup> Sean Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Ireland: An Encyclopedia* (New York, 2005) 421 (entry by Nicholas Evans); Scully, 'Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of Malachy,' 239-256:246.

<sup>264</sup> 'Iohannem Scotum,' *Adam Bremensis*, III, xxi.

<sup>265</sup> AB IV, x, 'habens Hyberniam Scothorum patriam, quae nunc Irland dicitur,' *Adam Bremensis* IV, x.

<sup>266</sup> From 900-1200 the inhabitants name for their country was Ériu, see Koch (ed.), *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia*, 709.

<sup>267</sup> AB IV, x, footnote 24.

<sup>268</sup> *Annalista Saxo*, George Waitz (ed.), MGH Ss, Vol. 6 (Hannover, 1844) Year 952. Saxo Grammaticus, *Saxonis Grammatici Gesta Danorum*, Alfred Holder (ed.) (Strasbourg, 1886) Book IX.

<sup>269</sup> *Top.* 90-91.

he is probably referring to ‘the most ancient history of the Irish,’ his acknowledged source for the earliest part of the history section.<sup>270</sup> This most ancient history is the eleventh century *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*.<sup>271</sup> He also states that ‘with greater probability’ the word is derived from the Spanish River Ebro (*Hiber*).<sup>272</sup> Both of Gerald’s explanations of the name Hibernia reinforce his view that the Irish population originated in Spain.

### **Gerald and the Origins of the Irish People**

In the third part of the *Topography* Gerald tells the reader about the origins of the Irish, selectively using parts of *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* and the *History of the Kings of Britain* by the Anglo-Norman historian Geoffrey of Monmouth (1100-1155). Gerald’s manner of relating the origins of the Irish diminish the sense that the Irish have an ancient claim to their country.<sup>273</sup> Instead he puts the focus on establishing English claims for Irish territory.

Gerald’s source, the *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, describes a variety of legends—sometimes inconsistent with each other—but broadly agreeing that the Irish people originated in Scythia as descendants of Japheth, went to Egypt, then conquered Spain before arriving in Ireland.<sup>274</sup> Its aim in creating this long pedigree was, as Carey tells us, ‘to put Ireland on the same footing as Israel or Rome.’<sup>275</sup> The earliest part of Gerald’s history of the Irish roughly corresponds with parts of this account of waves of settlers or conquerors arriving in Ireland, often to die of plague or disease or to be conquered by the next wave of colonisation.<sup>276</sup> Following *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* Gerald tells us that the first inhabitants were led by Cesarea, a grand-daughter of Noah, who had escaped the flood by going to the ‘farthest island of the West, where no man had yet

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<sup>270</sup> *Top.* 91.

<sup>271</sup> *Top.* 85-91.

<sup>272</sup> *Top.* 91.

<sup>273</sup> Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 40.

<sup>274</sup> John Carey, ‘Did the Irish come from Spain? The Legends of the Milesians,’ *History Ireland* 9, no 3 (2001) 8-11:8.

<sup>275</sup> Carey, *The Irish National Origin-Legend: Synthetic Pseudo History*, 1.

<sup>276</sup> *Top.* 85, 86, 87, 88, 90. Michael A. Faletra, *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination: The Matters of Britain in the Twelfth Century* (New York, 2014) 159.

lived.<sup>277</sup> In this remote location, untouched by humans and thus by sin, she hoped to avoid God's vengeance.<sup>278</sup> Gerald throws doubt on this story, yet acknowledges the possibility of it being true.<sup>279</sup> Like *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* he then describes the second waves of settlers as descendants of Japheth, the third and fourth as originating in Scythia, the remote north-eastern region of Europe.<sup>280</sup> The fifth arrivals in Gerald's account are the four sons of King Milesius from Spain and their followers.<sup>281</sup> He tells us that 'ancient histories relate' that the ancestors of Milesius invented the language of the Irish (Gaidelus—Gaelic), and another, Scotia, the daughter of a pharaoh, gave her name to the Irish in Ireland as well as to the people now living in the 'northern part of Britain.'<sup>282</sup> In *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* these are the last settlers of Ireland, descendants of the original Gaels or Scoti from Scythia.<sup>283</sup>

Gerald, however, adds yet another invasion, citing Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* which relates the origins myths of the Britons.<sup>284</sup> Gerald recounts Geoffrey's story of a Basque people that came in search of land being given leave to settle in Ireland by a British king, Gurguintius.<sup>285</sup> The British king had the authority to do this, Gerald tells us, because Ireland was at this time 'either entirely uninhabited or had been settled by him [the British king].'<sup>286</sup> Through this story Gerald implies that even before the Basque fleet arrived and settled in Ireland, Ireland had been under British rule. British authority is further strengthened as the Basques are given leave to settle in Ireland by the decision of the British king. As Gerald puts it: 'From this it is clear that Ireland can with some right be claimed by the kings of Britain, even though the claim be from olden times.'<sup>287</sup> By merging these origin myths Gerald puts emphasis on what he sees as the rights of English sovereignty over the island as

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<sup>277</sup> Top. 85. In *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* her name is Cessair. *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, R.A. Stewart Macalister (ed.) 26-38

<sup>278</sup> Top. 85.

<sup>279</sup> Top. 85. Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 40.

<sup>280</sup> Top. 86. Third arrival, 87; fourth arrival, Top. 88; first king of Ireland, 89. On the Scythian connection: Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 26f. On Gerald undermining the Scythian legends, see Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 39.

<sup>281</sup> Top. 90.

<sup>282</sup> Top. 91.

<sup>283</sup> *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, R.A. Stewart Macalister (ed.) 65-95. On the Milesians, see Carey, 'Did the Irish come from Spain? The Legends of the Milesians,' 8-11; Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 23-26.

<sup>284</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*, 3.12.

<sup>285</sup> Top. 92; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*, 3.12; Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 43.

<sup>286</sup> Top. 92.

<sup>287</sup> Top. 92.

<sup>287</sup> Top. 92. On Gerald's claims for English sovereignty, see Scully, 'The Remonstrance of Irish Princes, 1317,' *History Ireland* 21, no. 6 (2013) 16-19:16-17.

King Henry had no dynastic justification for his invasion.<sup>288</sup> This origin myth reinforces Gerald's view that the current inhabitants of Ireland have fewer claims to Ireland than the English.

Gerald makes further use of the Basque connection to strengthen Henry's claims, this time based on geography. At the time Gerald was writing, the Basque country north of the Pyrenees was part of the Angevin Empire, under the rule of Gerald's king, Henry. The empire stretched from Gascony and Aquitaine and the Basque city of Bayonne to Ireland.<sup>289</sup> Gerald points out that it is therefore right that Ireland too is part of this realm.<sup>290</sup> As Gerald regards the Basques as coming from Spain, this is also another connection between Ireland and Spain.<sup>291</sup>

After the Spanish colonisers, yet another people settled in Ireland: the Norwegians. Gerald tells us that the Norwegians ruled 'for some thirty years' over Ireland and were then driven out.<sup>292</sup> Gerald relates that a generation later the Norwegians came back to Ireland, but this time Gerald calls them Ostmen.<sup>293</sup> That they are the same people is clear as he tells us that the Ostmen came 'from Norway and the northern islands' and seemed to be 'remnants of the previous people.'<sup>294</sup> Gerald's view of them is ambiguous. He tells us they came 'in the guise of peace on the pretext of commerce' but when the Norwegians built cities surrounded by walls this created tension and anxiety in the Irish population, with the consequence of an increase in violence.<sup>295</sup> Although building cities—a sign of civilisation—they are depicted as barbarians. Gerald speaks of them as 'maddened by their pagan fury.'<sup>296</sup> In reality the Ostmen became Christian and were, by the tenth century if not earlier, thoroughly assimilated with the Irish, something that Gerald omits to tell us.<sup>297</sup> This omission may relate to

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<sup>288</sup> Scully, 'The Remonstrance of Irish Princes, 1317,' 16-19:18. See also Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 45.

<sup>289</sup> Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire*; Robert Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings* (Oxford, 2000).

<sup>290</sup> *Top.* 92.

<sup>291</sup> He calls them 'the Basque people from Spain. *Basclenses de Hispaniarum*,' *Topographia Hibernie*, 161.

<sup>292</sup> *Top.* 111, 113.

<sup>293</sup> *Top.* 117.

<sup>294</sup> *Top.* 117.

<sup>295</sup> *Top.* 117.

<sup>296</sup> *Top.* 111, 114.

<sup>297</sup> Lesley Abrams, 'The Conversion of the Scandinavians of Dublin,' in Christopher Harper-Bill (ed.), *Proceedings of the Battle Conference in Dublin, 1997* (Woodbridge, 1998) 2-29:4.

the fact that Gerald is strongly against any kind of integration with the Irish: ‘This place finds people already accursed or makes them so.’<sup>298</sup> He would not want to show that integration can successfully take place.

In his first recension of the *Topography*’s narration of Irish myths of origin, Gerald ignores Bede’s account of the origins of the Britons, which also relates to the Irish.<sup>299</sup> Bede tells us that the first settlers in Britain came from Armorica (Brittany); later the Picts came in ships from Scythia.<sup>300</sup> The Picts had first gone to Ireland and asked to settle there but the Irish advised them to go to the island beside them, to Britain, and promised help if needed. The Irish also supplied the first settlers with wives, signalling benevolence and peaceful intent in fostering good relations with their neighbours. To Gerald, however, it is the Picts that are ‘vastly excelling them [the Irish] in arms and valour,’ as he describes them in a late recension of the *Topography*.<sup>301</sup> He wants the reader to believe that the Irish have no claim on their land based on their origins or ancient history, but describes how the island was conquered by numbers of people by force of arms. According to Gerald the same lack of hereditary principle governed kingship in Ireland:

These kings achieved the kingship of the whole island not through any ceremony of coronation, or rite of anointing, or even right of heredity or order of succession, but only by force and arms. They became kings, each in his own way.<sup>302</sup>

Thus the kingship in Ireland is not based on blood lines or legal claims but only brute force. Henry II, on the other hand, although invading the country, had legal claims. As Gillingham explains, ‘for a king who saw himself as a civilised ruler of a civilised world, brute force alone was not enough.’<sup>303</sup> Henry constructed claims based on history, as explained by Gerald. Gerald also recounts claims from the time of the Irish chieftains’ ‘spontaneous surrender.’<sup>304</sup> Importantly he also had the papal justification

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<sup>298</sup> *Top.* 101.

<sup>299</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.1.

<sup>300</sup> Bede, *HE*. 1.1. See Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 26-27.

<sup>301</sup> *Giraldus Cambrensis, The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) (1905, Ontario, 2000) 3.16.

<sup>302</sup> *Top.* 119.

<sup>303</sup> Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 158; see also Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 136.

<sup>304</sup> *Top.* 92. On Henry and the submission of the Irish kings: Warren, *Henry II*, 194f; John D. Hosler, *Henry II: A Medieval Soldier at War, 1147-1189* (Leiden, 2007) 72.



enshrined in *Laudabiliter*, which hailed the conquest as a civilising and Christianising mission, an issue discussed in the first chapter of this thesis.<sup>305</sup>

### **Gerald's Ideals of Pastoral Care and his View of the Irish Church**

Gerald's priestly ideals are, like Adam's, inspired by Gregory the Great. Gerald specifically cites Gregory and, like Adam, builds up an image of the model bishop.<sup>306</sup> For Gerald, as for Gregory and Adam, priests and bishops should be models to follow. Yet there is a stark difference in the way the Gregorian and reformist ideas influence Adam's and Gerald's representations of the peoples of whom they write. Adam, as we have seen, blames the clerics for their neglect, and holds the people free of guilt, as they are uninformed and therefore cannot help their errors. Gerald, on the other hand, who writes of a country that had been Christian for more than six hundred years, criticises a church which he perceives as inward-looking and failing in correcting errors of its people, yet also blames the people for being weak in faith.<sup>307</sup>

The church in Ireland was different than that of continental Europe. Ireland was a rural environment and its church had been based around monasteries. A common view of the historian was that the Irish church was based on the hereditary principle, as was every aspect of life, from politics to learning at this time.<sup>308</sup> It was thought that married clergy transmitted their offices to their children, creating dynasties which ran churches and monasteries, blurring the division of church property and family inheritance.<sup>309</sup> It also gave rise to abuses of office. Flanagan has recently presented a divergent and more complex idea of the Irish church and monasticism at this time. She argues that monastic settlements and churches were run by secular people, who were accorded 'legal privileges of a high-ranking ecclesiastic,' whose job was to control the economy of the foundation, and that these jobs ran in families.<sup>310</sup> This, as Flanagan argues, does not mean degeneration, but could well have protected the episcopal office from secular

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<sup>305</sup> A version of this document is found in Gerald of Wales' *Expugnatio*, II, 5.

<sup>306</sup> *Top.* 105. Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 32; Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 112-113.

<sup>307</sup> Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 47-49.

<sup>308</sup> Ó Corráin, *Ireland before the Normans*, 84.

<sup>309</sup> Marie-Therese Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge, 2010) 36-38.

<sup>310</sup> Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 36.

concerns.<sup>311</sup> The bishops, even before the reform of the church, had the highest ranking office; the churches were multifaceted communities with a variety of authorities working side by side.<sup>312</sup> The monastic settlements were of long standing and, and as Boivin points out, the strong monastic tradition in Ireland could not disappear from one day to another.<sup>313</sup>

The monastic institutions in Ireland that Gerald criticises were centres of study and artistic excellence, famous throughout Western Europe.<sup>314</sup> Gerald himself mentions a gospel book of such delicate and intricate work that he believes it was produced by 'the help of the divine grace.'<sup>315</sup> What Gerald describes is a gospel book similar to the Book of Kells, a product of the artistic tradition of the Irish monasteries.<sup>316</sup> Gerald will not acclaim the tradition that produced such craft. To Gerald the work is 'miraculous,' the credit given to divine inspiration rather than human craftsmanship.<sup>317</sup>

In the *Topography* Gerald heads a chapter: 'The Irish Clergy, in many points praiseworthy.'<sup>318</sup> Whilst Gerald writes 'clergy,' it is very soon clear that he refers to monks who are also prelates or priests. This and the following chapters in the *Topography* were based on sermons preached by Gerald at a synod in Dublin in 1186, in response to a sermon by Irish Cistercian Ailbe Ua Maelmuige, who had accused the new arrivals, the English and Welsh clergy, of bringing with them drunkenness and immorality.<sup>319</sup> Gerald's sermons praised the Irish clergy but the compliments were quickly diluted by criticism. According to Gerald, the Irish clergy, like the bad bishops in Adam's narrative, did not do their job properly. Gerald explains that the Irish clergy are 'on the whole to be commended for their observance:' he mentions that chastity 'shines out as a kind of special prerogative.'<sup>320</sup> He praises their diligence in carrying out obligations 'in the matter of the Psalms and the hours, reading and praying' and

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<sup>311</sup> Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 37.

<sup>312</sup> Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 38.

<sup>313</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 368.

<sup>314</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 368; Martin, 'Ireland in the Time of St. Bernard, St. Malachy, St. Laurence O'Toole,' 1-35:15.

<sup>315</sup> *Top.* 72.

<sup>316</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 336.

<sup>317</sup> *Top.* 72.

<sup>318</sup> *Top.* 104.

<sup>319</sup> *Top.* 104-106. Gerald of Wales, *De rebus as se gestis*, II xiii-xiv. *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 91-96; Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 366; Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 163, footnote 89.

<sup>320</sup> *Top.* 104.

that they keep within the enclosures of the church, where they fulfil their obligations.<sup>321</sup> However, Gerald manages to undermine the praise as he continues: ‘But it would be better if after their long fasts they were as sober as they are late in coming to food, as sincere as they are severe, as pure as they are dour, and as genuine as they appear.’<sup>322</sup> The above section clearly refers to monks in enclosures and discusses monastic practises. Gerald pours his criticism over these Irish clerics, especially regarding the lack of leadership of the community outside the monastery; a criticism that does not necessarily reflect the reality of these communities.

Gerald tells us the Irish clerics had been too concerned with their own spiritual development to attend to those outside the walls of the monastery: ‘they neither preach the word of the Lord to the people, nor tell them of their sins, nor extirpate vices from the flock committed to them, nor instil virtues.’<sup>323</sup> He criticises the monks for giving ‘themselves almost always to contemplation alone.’<sup>324</sup> The problem lies in the different obligations of priests and monks: ‘A monk is so called as being the guardian of a single individual, and looks after himself alone. But a cleric is obliged to assume responsibility for the care of many.’<sup>325</sup> In Gerald’s opinion, the Irish prelates have not assumed this responsibility: ‘They ‘are so enamoured of the beauty of Rachel that they find blear-eyed Leah disgusting.’<sup>326</sup> Gerald is referring to the story in Genesis 29 where Jacob married two sisters, the beautiful but infertile Rachel and her plainer sister Leah, to whom God granted four sons. For Gregory the Great their names were commonly used as spiritual symbols; Rachel for the inward looking contemplative life of a monk, Leah for the busy active religious life.<sup>327</sup> The church has always valued both ways of life. The contemplative life (the beauty of Rachel) brings you closer to God; ‘you see the light more keenly’ to quote Gregory the Great.<sup>328</sup> Leah (the active life), although

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<sup>321</sup> *Top.* 104.

<sup>322</sup> *Top.* 104.

<sup>323</sup> *Top.* 105.

<sup>324</sup> *Top.* 105.

<sup>325</sup> *Top.* 106.

<sup>326</sup> *Top.* 105. Gen. 29:17.

<sup>327</sup> On ‘Leah’ and ‘Rachel’ in the Middle Ages (with emphasis on St Bernard), see Adriaan Hendrik Bredero, *Bernard of Clairvaux: Between Cult and History* (Grand Rapids, 1996) 277f; in Bede, see Harris, ‘Bede and Gregory’s Allusive Angles,’ 271-289:274.

<sup>328</sup> Gregory the Great, ‘Letter to Theoctista,’ *Registrum Epistolarum*, Philip Schaff and Henry Wade (eds.) NPNF, Second Series, Vol. 12 (Buffalo, 1895) 1.5.

she sees less clearly with her weak eyes, is fertile: ‘the active life, fruitful but tender-eyed: seeing less, but bringing forth more.’<sup>329</sup>

Although the spiritual life of contemplation is important, the busy and active life cannot be neglected. For Gregory the Great and Adam, a combination of both is ideal. We have already seen these characteristics in Ansgar and Rimbart, praised by Adam. Gerald on the other hand, thought ‘the active life when holy and honest was more useful and glorious.’<sup>330</sup> In the *Topography* Gerald outlines the advantages of an active life when he rebukes the simple and silent prelates who have more of the monk than the cleric in them, citing Jerome: ‘An innocent life without much speaking does as much damage by its silence as good by its example. For the wolves have to be driven off by the barking of the dogs and the staff of the shepherds.’<sup>331</sup> Unlike Adam, Gerald finds no exemplary bishops to acclaim. He quotes from Isaiah regarding the Irish prelates: ‘there was no one among them to raise his voice like a trumpet (Isaiah 58:1).’<sup>332</sup> This Bible citation is quoted by Gregory in his *Pastoral Care* and explained in relation to the importance of the bishop as a herald:

For it is true that whosoever enters on the priesthood undertakes the office of a herald, so as to walk, himself crying aloud, before the coming of the judge who follows terribly. Wherefore, if the priest knows not how to preach, what voice of a loud cry shall the mute herald utter?<sup>333</sup>

Gerald, then, cites from Gregory when speaking of the Irish, stating that there was no one amongst them who knew how to preach and spread the word of Christ. He emphasises the point that in Ireland the priests and monks have failed: ‘they are too slack and negligent in the correction of a people that is guilty of such enormities.’<sup>334</sup> Below, Gerald is referring to what he sees as the immorality of the Irish:

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<sup>329</sup> Gregory the Great, ‘Letter to Theoctista,’ *Registrum Epistolarum*, 1.5.

<sup>330</sup> Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, 290. Constable based his view on the text of Gerald’s *Speculum Ecclesiae*, J. S. Brewer (ed.), *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, Vol. 3, RS (London, 1861-1891) 4.18.

<sup>331</sup> *Top.* 106. Gerald cites from Jerome’s Epistle 69; Jerome, *Epistles*, W.H. Fremantle, G. Lewis and W.G. Martley (tr.), Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.), NCPD Vol.6 (Buffalo, 1893). He also cites epistle 53 with similar content.

<sup>332</sup> *Top.* 105.

<sup>333</sup> Gregory the Great, *Pastoral Care*, H. Davis (tr.), 2.4.

<sup>334</sup> *Top.* 105.

If the prelates from the time of Patrick through all those years had done a man's job, as they should have done...they would have extirpated at any rate to a certain extent those abominations of the people already mentioned, and would have impressed upon them some semblance of honour and religious feeling.<sup>335</sup>

Patrick, as Gerald relates, 'was the first by the aid of divine grace, to preach and plant there the Christian Faith.'<sup>336</sup> He converted the entire nation and appointed bishops so 'they should water what he had planted.'<sup>337</sup> The language of sowing and planting is generally used by missions in areas undergoing Christian conversion as we can recall from the first chapter of this thesis. Although Patrick did his job, and planted the faith, his successors did not follow up and water what he had planted. Gerald implies that what had been a strong Christian faith from the start had faltered because of the failure of the priests to maintain moral standards.

Because of this lack of clerical leadership and example, the faith became weak and people morally corrupt. Gerald's proof of the lack of leadership within the church is that Ireland is the only Christian kingdom without a martyr; no blood was shed 'to cement the foundation of the growing church.'<sup>338</sup> A preacher who challenged the barbarous habits of the nation may well have been martyred: no such thing is on record. Gerald stresses that Ireland is somehow unique in this: 'It would be difficult to find such a state of things in any other Christian kingdom.'<sup>339</sup> Gerald ignores or is unaware of the Irish tradition that martyrdom could be expressed in other ways than bloodshed.<sup>340</sup> Instead he blames the prelates especially, as not one of them had been martyred in the defence of the church. To him Ireland had no martyrs either recently or in the past.<sup>341</sup> The bishop of Cashel takes pains to explain to Gerald that the lack of martyrs in Ireland is an attestation that the Irish:

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<sup>335</sup> *Top.* 105.

<sup>336</sup> *Top.* 95.

<sup>337</sup> *Top.* 95.

<sup>338</sup> *Top.* 105.

<sup>339</sup> *Top.* 105.

<sup>340</sup> Clare Stancliffe, 'Red, White and Blue Martyrdom,' in D. Whitelock, R. Ketterick and D. Dumville (eds.), *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1982) 21-46.

<sup>341</sup> Gerald is obviously unaware of the martyrdom suffered by the Irish bishop John of Mecklenburg in 1066, related by Adam in *AB* III, Li.

have always paid great honour and reverence to churchmen, and they have never put out their hands against the saints of God. But now a people has come to the kingdom which knows how, and is accustomed, to make martyrs. From now on Ireland will have its martyrs, just like other countries.<sup>342</sup>

Gerald describes the bishop's reply to this accusation as *oblique*, which O'Meara has translated as 'sly:' it is often rendered as 'indirect' or 'covert.'<sup>343</sup> Thus the bishops response can be seen as a sarcastic, mocking answer back that the English, instead of showing due reverence to their bishops like the Irish, had them killed.<sup>344</sup> He is alluding to the murder of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, martyred in England in 1170.<sup>345</sup> The murder of Becket, in his own cathedral, caused revulsion throughout Europe. King Henry, who had the appearance of being implicated, had to swear his non-compliance in the matter in front of papal legates and to do penance, to be absolved from complicity in the crime.<sup>346</sup> The murdered archbishop gave his forgiveness, according to Gerald. After Henry 'prayed at night at Canterbury...St Thomas, that noble martyr, his anger now appeased by the king's tears and prayers, bestowed his favour upon him.'<sup>347</sup> Gerald, perhaps out of loyalty to King Henry, managed to turn this instance of murder into something positive for the reform of the English Church:

Just as the first Thomas [the apostle] cemented with his own blood the foundations of the church which was rising from the ground, so this one [Thomas Becket] by shedding of his blood restored to its former state a church which had been founded a long since but was, so to speak, in a ruinous state, worn by age and shaken by the frequent onslaught of storms.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>342</sup> *Top.* 107.

<sup>343</sup> Lewis and Short Latin Dictionary at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=oblique&la=la&can=oblique0#lexicon>

<sup>344</sup> For comments on this episode see Brendan Smith, 'The Frontiers of Church Reform in the British Isles, 1170-1230,' in David Abulafia and Nora Berend (eds.), *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices* (Cambridge, 2002) 239-253:239-240.

<sup>345</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 509-510.

<sup>346</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, 530-531. On Becket, see Frank Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (London, 1986).

<sup>347</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I.45.

<sup>348</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I.20.

## Gerald's Disregard of the Irish Reform Movement

Gerald ignores the fact that reform and reorganisation within the Irish church had started more than fifty years before he wrote the *Topography* and *The Conquest of Ireland*. A driving force behind the reorganisation of the Irish church was an Irishman, St Malachy.<sup>349</sup> A *Life of Malachy* was written by his good friend Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), the greatest church reformer of this era.<sup>350</sup> Bernard had also been a leading force behind the second crusade.<sup>351</sup> When writing about his preaching the third crusade in Wales in 1188, Gerald compared himself to the great reformer. Like Bernard, Gerald had spoken to the audience in a language unknown to them, yet his listeners were filled with devotion and moved to join the crusade.<sup>352</sup> Considering Gerald's admiration for Bernard and the close parallels between his account of the Irish church and Bernard's account of that church in its unreformed state, it is likely that he knew of Bernard's work and of his friendship with the Irish bishop.<sup>353</sup> Malachy had been deeply impressed with St Bernard's monastery at Clairvaux and established a Cistercian foundation in Ireland after this model.<sup>354</sup> When Gerald arrived in Ireland there were already seven Cistercian monasteries there.<sup>355</sup> Gerald avoids this subject. For instance, he mentions Christian, Bishop of Lismore and papal legate, who attended the council of Cashel, without relating that this bishop had been placed in training in

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<sup>349</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.). See Bieler, *Ireland, Harbinger of the Middle Ages*; Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*; Scully, 'Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of Malachy,' 239-256.

<sup>350</sup> Bredero, *Bernard of Clairvaux: Between Cult and History*; Brian Patrick McGuire (ed.), *A Companion to Bernard of Clairvaux* (Leiden, 2011); G.R. Evans, *Bernard of Clairvaux* (Oxford, 2000). The spread of the Cistercians, see Constance Hoffman Berman, *The Cistercian Evolution: The Invention of a Religious Order in Twelfth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia, 2002).

<sup>351</sup> On Bernard's preaching tour, see Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (Yale, 2007) 80f.

<sup>352</sup> Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis* II, xviii; *Autobiography*, Butler (ed.), 101. For a comment or possible explanation on this episode, see Wada, 'Gerald on Gerald, Self-Presentation by Giraldus Cambrensis,' 223-246:238.

<sup>353</sup> Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 245, states 'it is hardly likely that he [Gerald] was unaware of Bernard's *Life of Malachy*.'

<sup>354</sup> The abbey of Mellifont was established in 1142. Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 120. See also Evans, *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 21. For Mellifont and sister plantations, see Bredero, *Bernard of Clairvaux: Between Cult and History*, 251-252. For Malachy and Bernard, see Christopher Holdsworth, 'Bernard as a Father Abbot,' in Patrick McGuire (ed.), *A Companion to Bernard of Clairvaux* (Leiden, 2011) 169-219:193-196.

<sup>355</sup> Janet E. Burton and Julie Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2011) 47.

Clairvaux by Malachy and subsequently became the first Abbot of Mellifont, facts that surely must have been known to him.<sup>356</sup>

Thanks to Bernard, Malachy was the outward face of reform in Ireland, but the restructuring of the Irish church had started long before his time with a number of synods where reform was on the agenda. The synod of Ráith Bressail in 1111 established Armagh and Cashel as archbishoprics and divided the country into dioceses.<sup>357</sup> The synod of Kells in 1152 defined new dioceses which reflected both the old monasteries and the new political power structures in the country. It was presided over by the papal legate John Paparo and changes were formally approved by him.<sup>358</sup> Gerald withholds information regarding earlier synods in order to suggest that reform was not an Irish initiative but an initiative from Rome. He claims there were no archbishops in Ireland before John Paparo, the papal legate who ‘came here not so many years ago’ and established the bishoprics of Armagh, Dublin, Cashel and Tuam.<sup>359</sup> Thus Gerald is misleading the reader.

Whilst Gerald’s *Topography* largely neglects to tell the reader of the Irish reform achievement, Bernard’s narrative obscures the long process of reform by focusing solely on Malachy.<sup>360</sup> However, it must be noted that Bernard’s narrative, as Scully argues, should be read as a spiritual and moral guide, and not as a representative account of Irish reform.<sup>361</sup> Bernard portrays the Irish as barbaric before they had the benefit of Malachy’s reforming work. But by the time the reforms are implemented the Irish, in his account, have left all their barbaric habits to become an ideal Christian community.<sup>362</sup> They are reborn in the spirit of church reform: ‘Their hardness of heart yielded, their barbarity quelled...Barbarous laws were extirpated and those of Rome

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<sup>356</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I.35. Malachy had brought Gillachrist (Christian) Ua Connairche with him to Clairvaux in 1140. At Clairvaux he had trained alongside the future Pope Eugenius III who had appointed him Bishop of Lismore and papal legate 1150, *Expugnatio*, p. 314, note 168.

<sup>357</sup> Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 34.

<sup>358</sup> Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 34f, 243. Map of dioceses in Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 388.

<sup>359</sup> *Top.* 96.

<sup>360</sup> Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, 244. Martin, ‘Ireland in the Time of St. Bernard, St. Malachy, St. Laurence O’Toole,’ 1-35:1-2, argues that Bernard of Clairvaux was completely unaware that the church in Ireland had been ‘largely transformed by native Irish reformers.’

<sup>361</sup> Scully, ‘Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux’s Life of Malachy,’ 239-256:246-247.

<sup>362</sup> Scully, ‘Ireland and the Irish in Bernard of Clairvaux’s Life of Malachy,’ 239-256:255. See also David, ‘Looking East and West,’ 45.



introduced (*Cessit duritia, quievit barbaries...Fiunt de medio barbaricae leges, Romanae introducuntur*).<sup>363</sup> The *Life of Malachy* concludes that the Irish reform was a success, and, thanks to Malachy: ‘so much have all things changed for the better that today one could apply to that people what God says through his prophet: those who were not my people hitherto, are now my people (*Postremo sic mutata in melius omnia, ut hodie illi genti conveniat, quod Dominus per prophetam dicit: qui ante non populus meus, nunc populus meus*).’<sup>364</sup>

Gerald chose to ignore this positive outcome of the reform movement; instead he focussed on the negative aspects of the unreformed Irish found in St Bernard’s work. Gerald’s depiction of the Irish is too similar to Bernard’s to be coincidental. For example, when Malachy was consecrated bishop, Bernard tells us that Malachy realised ‘he had been sent not to men but to beasts (*non ad homines se, sed ad bestias destinatum*).’<sup>365</sup> Gerald too uses this word about the Irish people when he states that the Irish ‘live on beasts only and live like beasts (*Gens ex bestiis solum et bestialiter uiuens*).’<sup>366</sup> St Bernard relates that:

They [the Irish] gave no tithes, no first-fruits; they did not contract legitimate marriage nor make confessions; there was neither penitent nor confessor to be found (*Non decimas, non primitias dare, non legitima inire conjugia, non facere confessiones, poenitentias nec qui peteret, nec qui daret penitus inveniri*).<sup>367</sup>

Malachy, as Bernard tells us, had to re-institute the sacraments of confirmation and marriage of which they ‘knew nothing, and cared less (*quae omnia aut ignorabant, aut negligebant*).’<sup>368</sup> Gerald does not mention the re-institution of the sacraments, but otherwise the words he uses are similar:

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<sup>363</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.); *Liber De Vita Et Rebus Gestis Sancti Malachiae Hiberniae Episcopi*, Migne, PL 182 (1074-1117) VIII, 17.

<sup>364</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.); *Liber De Vita Et Rebus Gestis Sancti Malachiae Hiberniae Episcopi*, VIII, 17.

<sup>365</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.); *Liber De Vita Et Rebus Gestis Sancti Malachiae Hiberniae Episcopi*, VIII, 16.

<sup>366</sup> *Top.* 93.

<sup>367</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.); *Liber De Vita Et Rebus Gestis Sancti Malachiae Hiberniae Episcopi*, VIII, 16.

<sup>368</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.); *Liber De Vita Et Rebus Gestis Sancti Malachiae Hiberniae Episcopi*, III, 7.

they are a filthy people wallowing in vice. Of all peoples it is the least instructed in the rudiments of the Faith. They do not yet pay tithes or first fruits or contract marriages. (*Gens enim hec gens spurcissima, gens uitii inuolutissima; gens omnium gentium in fidei rudimentis incultissima. Nondum enim decimas vel primitias soluunt; nondum matrimonia contrahunt*).<sup>369</sup>

Malachy, in Bernard's account, is shocked at the life-style of the Irish:

never had he found people so wanton in their way of life, so cruel in superstition, so heedless of faith, lawless, dead-set against discipline, so foul in their life-style; Christians in name, yet pagans at heart (*Nusquam adhuc tales expertus fuerat in quantacunque barbarie. Nusquam repererat sic protervos ad mores, sic ferales ad ritus, sic ad fidem impios, ad leges barbarous, cervicosos ad disciplinam, spurcos ad vitam. Christian nomine re pagani*).<sup>370</sup>

Note that Malachy refers to the Irish as *spurcos* (filthy) whilst Gerald emphasises the word by using the superlative, *spurcissima*. Gerald follows in the footsteps of Bernard in his representation of the Irish. As reform was the justification for the conquest of Ireland, Gerald cannot show it as completed. In Gerald's view, the reform is, or should have been, brought by the English. He cannot endorse the positive ending of Bernard's work. Instead he spells out that the Irish are not civilised people or real Christians; a view that is evident in every aspect of his representation of the Irish: their appearance, character and way of life.

## Gerald and the Irish: Appearance and Character

An individual's appearance—physique as well as dress—was in this era believed to be determined by geographical factors as we saw in Adam's depiction of the strong warriors of the north. Gerald partly follows this ancient view of the appearance of a northern barbarian as strong and hardy. However, Gerald's reformist views of the Irish as sinners is evident in the way he describes their appearance. Gerald's view of the physique of the Irish is two-fold. On one hand, Gerald reports that the Irish have by

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<sup>369</sup> *Top.* 98.

<sup>370</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of St Malachy the Irishman*, Robert T. Meyer (tr.) *Liber De Vita Et Rebus Gestis Sancti Malachiae Hiberniae Episcopi*, VIII, 16.

nature ‘beautiful upright bodies and handsome and well-complexioned faces.’<sup>371</sup> On the other hand, we are told those that are malformed, ‘have not their like elsewhere.’<sup>372</sup> For Gerald physical beauty is a mirror of a person’s character; outward beauty was matched by a noble virtuous character, a common idea in the Middle Ages.<sup>373</sup> He explains that ‘those who are kindly fashioned by nature turn out fine, so those that are without nature’s blessing turn out in a horrible way.’<sup>374</sup> Gerald’s praise of the Irish appearance is unusual. Only in Bede do we find another example of praise of barbarians from the north-western fringes of the world, when he recounts a story of Gregory the Great meeting English slaves at a market in Rome, and remarking on their handsome appearance.<sup>375</sup> As Scully points out, classical texts put emphasis on the ugliness and strength of the northern barbarians.<sup>376</sup> Gerald further tells us that the ‘natural qualities of the Irish are excellent.’<sup>377</sup> Despite this admiration, Gerald also tells us that he has ‘never seen among any other people so many that are blind by birth, so many lame, so many maimed in body, and so many suffering from some natural defect.’<sup>378</sup> According to Gerald, they are punished by God in their physical appearance: ‘it seems a just punishment from God that those who do not look to him with the interior light of the mind, should often grieve in being deprived of the gift of the light that is bodily and external.’<sup>379</sup> Their looks, he claims, are a direct result of specific sexual practices:

Moreover, I have never seen among any other people so many blind by birth, so many lame, so many maimed in body, so many suffering from some natural defect...it is not surprising if nature sometimes produces such beings contrary to her ordinary laws when

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<sup>371</sup> Top. 93.

<sup>372</sup> Top. 109. Sexual deviance and malformed bodies, see Faletra, *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination*, 140.

<sup>373</sup> Debra Higgs Strickland, ‘The Holy and the Unholy: Analogies for the Numinous in Late Medieval Art,’ in Debra Higgs Strickland (ed.) *Images of Medieval Sanctity: Essays in Honour of Gary Dickson* (Leiden, 2007) 101-120; Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews, Making Monsters in Medieval Art*, 29f; Hassig, ‘Iconography of Rejection,’ 25-46:28-30; Jan A. Aertsen, ‘Beauty in the Middle Ages: A Forgotten Transcendental?’ *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 1 (1991) 68-97.

<sup>374</sup> Top. 109.

<sup>375</sup> The story is found in Bede’s short life of Gregory in the *HE* and in the Whitby Life of Gregory, *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great by an Anonymous Monk of Whitby*, Bertram Colgrave (tr.) (Cambridge, 1985). See Harris, ‘Bede and Gregory’s Allusive Angles,’ 271-289:274; Scully, ‘Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,’ 49-62:52; Scully, ‘Bede’s *Chronica Maiora*,’ 47-74:63-64; Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 27-45.

<sup>376</sup> Scully, ‘Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,’ 49-62:52.

<sup>377</sup> Top. 93.

<sup>378</sup> Top. 109.

<sup>379</sup> Top. 109. Gerald and ancestry as an explanation for human vice, see Faletra, *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination*, 148.

dealing with a people that is adulterous, incestuous, unlawfully conceived and born, outside the law and shamefully abusing nature herself in spiteful and horrible practises.<sup>380</sup>

In this instance Gerald follows stereotypes that originate in ancient narratives which mention sexual immorality amongst the Irish.<sup>381</sup> Strabo (d. 24AD) stated that the Irish ‘openly have intercourse, not only with unrelated women, but with their mothers and sisters as well.’<sup>382</sup> Pomponius Mela was less specific; he thought the inhabitants ‘unrefined, ignorant of all the virtues more than any other people, and totally lacking all sense of duty.’<sup>383</sup> Jerome stated that ‘the nation of the *Scoti* does not have individual wives, but, as if they had read Plato’s republic or follow the example of Cato, no wife belongs to a particular man, but as each desires, they indulge themselves like beasts.’<sup>384</sup> In the above citation, when Gerald mentions incest, it is possible that he refers to the habit of men or women marrying within a degree that was forbidden by the church, for instance a man marrying his brother’s widow.<sup>385</sup> Irish legal codes permitted divorce and re-marriage.<sup>386</sup> This horrified twelfth-century reformers like Gerald, who saw Irish marriage customs as leading to ‘sexual sinfulness on a massive scale.’<sup>387</sup> Gerald claimed that the Irish took the Old Testament literally and copied what was done in the Bible: their polygamy follows the models of the Old Testament: ‘they follow the apparent teaching, and not the true doctrine, of the Old Testament.’<sup>388</sup>

‘Shamefully abusing nature’ in the above quote refers to bestiality which Gerald claims is ‘a particular vice of that people.’<sup>389</sup> Gerald also gives us two specific example of this vice, one in Ireland, the other in France.<sup>390</sup> The Irish woman in his narrative is

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<sup>380</sup> Top. 109.

<sup>381</sup> Scully, ‘Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,’ 49-62:55; Scully, ‘At World’s End; Scotland and Ireland in the Graeco-Roman Imagination,’ 164-170:168.

<sup>382</sup> Strabo, *Geography*, 4.5.4.

<sup>383</sup> Pomponius Mela, *De chorographia*, 3.53; Freeman (tr.) in *Ireland and the Classical World*, 48-49.

<sup>384</sup> Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum*, 2.7; Freeman (tr.) in *Ireland and the Classical World*, 99. For comments on immorality of peripheral peoples, see Killeen, ‘Ireland in the Greek and Roman Writers,’ 207-215:212.

<sup>385</sup> On the reformers views of Irish marriage, see Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 16.

<sup>386</sup> Donnchadh Ó Corráin, ‘Marriage in Early Ireland,’ in A. Cosgrave (ed.) *Marriage in Ireland* (Dublin, 1985) 5-24; Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 15-16; Anthony Candon, ‘Power, Politics and Polygamy: Women and Marriage in Late Pre-Norman Ireland,’ in Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds.), *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century: Reform and Renewal* (Dublin, 2006) 106-127.

<sup>387</sup> Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 150. See also, Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 140; Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe*, 31.

<sup>388</sup> Top. 98.

<sup>389</sup> Top. 54.

<sup>390</sup> Top. 56,

having bestial intercourse with a beautiful white goat.<sup>391</sup> This affair, according to Gerald, reflected badly on both participants but less so on the beast who merely obeyed nature, being ‘subject to rational beings in all things.’<sup>392</sup> It takes place at the court of King Rothericus of Connacht, who had been the last high king of Ireland. In *The Conquest of Ireland*, Rothericus (Ruaidrí) ‘foresaw that danger threatened both himself and the country as a whole as a result of the arrival of the foreigners,’ when English troops arrived in Ireland.<sup>393</sup>

Rothericus resisted the English invaders but suffered defeat in Dublin.<sup>394</sup> He travelled to England to sign the treaty of Windsor in 1175, according to which he remained King of Connaught and other unconquered areas, conditional on paying tribute to Henry II.<sup>395</sup> In Gerald’s version of events, which does not mention Windsor, Rothericus ‘obtained the English king’s peace, became dependent for the tenure of his kingdom on the king as an overlord, and bound himself in alliance with the king by the strongest ties of fealty and submission.’<sup>396</sup> Whilst he had sworn fealty to Henry II, Rothericus and the princes of Cork and Limerick resisted doing so to Prince John. They had heard of John’s disrespectful treatment of the Irish nobles who had come to greet him, and therefore ‘plotted to resist, and to guard the privileges of their ancient freedom even at the risk of their own lives.’<sup>397</sup> This may sound as if Gerald admires their courage, but it is probably meant as a criticism of John’s officials, who had superseded the Geraldines, Gerald’s own kin.<sup>398</sup> Yet, as one of the princes of Ireland who refused to pay homage to John, Gerald had a reason to make his court appear morally slack.

A similar story of a sexual relation between animal and human, in that case between a lion and a court lady, takes place in Paris.<sup>399</sup> Again it is the woman, rather than the

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<sup>391</sup> Top. 56. On Gerald and bestiality, see Knight, ‘Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles,’ 55–86:61–62; Joyce E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (London, 1994) 75–76.

<sup>392</sup> Top. 56, Top. 57.

<sup>393</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I.5.

<sup>394</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I.29.

<sup>395</sup> Windsor treaty of 1175, see Edmund Curtis and Robert MacDowell, *Irish Historical Documents 1172–1922* (London, 1968) 22–24; Sean Duffy, ‘Henry II and England’s Insular Neighbours,’ in Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (eds.), *Henry II: New Interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2007) 129–153:140; O’Crónín, *Early Medieval Ireland 400–1200*, 289.

<sup>396</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I, 33. Rothericus (also Ruaidrí or Rory) submission is a debated issue. Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, p. 312, footnote 157.

<sup>397</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, II.36.

<sup>398</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, notes p.355, footnote 488.

<sup>399</sup> Top. 57.

beast that is at fault. Before the mid-eighth century, penitentials regulating sexual behaviour such as bestiality virtually ignored the animal, whereas later, as in the case of Gerald's account, the animal was considered a participant that ought to be put to death.<sup>400</sup> To Gerald, both these women are rational human beings who abandon their position of privilege to abuse an irrational animal. In the case of the woman with the lion Gerald exclaims 'O Beasts! Both! Worthy of a shameful death!' and cites Leviticus, where such crimes were punished by death.<sup>401</sup> Both episodes can be seen as representative of Gerald's view of women. To quote Cohen, 'Gerald is almost incapable of representing women in other than demonising or corporeal terms.'<sup>402</sup> But the first story of beastly intercourse can also be seen as an affront to the court of the king of Connaught; the second may be an insult directed at the court of Philip (Augustus) II of France (1180-1223). Although Gerald generally admired the French royal house, the Capetians, he was at this time frustrated with current events: 'the conflict between Henry and his son Richard in alliance with Philip Augustus disturbed him. He saw the Crusade jeopardized by such strife.'<sup>403</sup> Other instances of bestiality result in the birth of monstrous beings; as discussed in the next chapter.

We have seen how for Gerald the physical appearance of part of the Irish population is a consequence of their barbaric and uncivilised moral behaviour, specifically their sexual sins. The way they dress is indicative of the barbaric character of the entire population. Gerald describes their clothes in detail, commenting that they are made up in a 'barbarous fashion,' a symbol of their primitivism.<sup>404</sup> He apparently shares the view of Isidore of Seville that 'the Scotti raise the hackles with their ugly dress as well as with their barking tongue,' thereby linking appearance with language.<sup>405</sup> The Irish also have untidy hair and flowing beards, another sign of a barbarian.<sup>406</sup> Cassiodorus (d. c 585), Roman senator and writer, explains that the word barbarian is a combination

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<sup>400</sup> Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, 73.

<sup>401</sup> *Top.* 57. Gerald cites Leviticus 20:16.

<sup>402</sup> Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, 'Hybrids, Monsters, Borderlands: The Bodies of Gerald of Wales,' in Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (ed.) *The Postcolonial Middle Ages* (New York, 2001) 85-103:93. See Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I.1, where he blames women for 'almost all the notable catastrophes' in the world.

<sup>403</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 70; Gerald's admiration for the Capetians, 81f.

<sup>404</sup> *Top.* 93. Scully, 'Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,' 49-62:54; Knight, 'Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles,' 55-86:65.

<sup>405</sup> '*horrent et male tecti cum latratoribus linguis Scotti*,' Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIX, xxiii, 6.

<sup>406</sup> *Top.* 93. Gerald makes a pun on the word *barbarus* and *barba*, see Joseph T. (Joep) Leersson, *Mere Irish & Fior-ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression Prior to the Nineteenth Century* (Amsterdam, 1986) 37-38.

of *barba* (beard) and *rus* (countryside): the country dweller who lives like a wild animal in the fields.<sup>407</sup> Gerald reinforces this image when he tells us that the Irish ‘live like beasts.’<sup>408</sup> These characteristics of savage barbarians are due to the remoteness of Ireland, and the failure of the church to provide pastoral care. As Gerald explains:

Since conventions are formed from living together in society, and since they are so removed in these distant parts from the ordinary world of men, as if they were in another world altogether and consequently cut off from well-behaved and law-abiding people, they know only of the barbarous habits in which they were born and brought up.<sup>409</sup>

Gerald follows an ancient *topos* of Graeco-Roman narratives, that of primitivism and barbarism increasing progressively the further away from these core cultures.<sup>410</sup> For Gerald the primitivism of the Irish is at its worst on the remote west coast, as it is furthest away from the civilised centre of the world.<sup>411</sup> He describes men encountered at sea beyond the offshore islands of the west coast as naked apart from a band of raw hide around their waists with their hair long, ‘coming down and across their shoulders, as is the Irish manner, and covering most of their bodies.’<sup>412</sup> We learn that they had never seen a boat made of wood, nor bread or cheese, and that they did not usually wear clothes but ‘sometimes, in great necessity’ wore hides of animals.<sup>413</sup> Nor had they heard of Christ, thus they were pagans in reality as well as appearance.<sup>414</sup>

This picture of the near naked men brings to mind Julius Caesar’s image of the Britons who often wore skins, ‘wear long hair, and shave every part of the body save the head and the upper lip.’<sup>415</sup> Gerald is familiar with Julius Caesar’s *Gallic War*.<sup>416</sup> This *topos*

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<sup>407</sup> Scully, ‘Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,’ 49-62:53. Scully cites Cassiodorus. Exposition in Psalter, cxiii 6.1.

<sup>408</sup> *Top.* 93; ‘*Gens ex bestiis solum et bestialiter uiuens*,’ *Topographia Hibernie*, 163.

<sup>409</sup> *Top.* 93.

<sup>410</sup> Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 47; Susan Guettel Cole, ‘I Know the Number of the Sand and the Measure of the Sea,’ Geography and Difference in the Early Greek World,’ in Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J. A. Talbert (eds.), *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies* (Malden, MA., 2010) 197-214:211; Killeen, ‘Ireland in the Greek and Roman Writers,’ 207-215:208.

<sup>411</sup> Scully, ‘Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,’ 49-62:58.

<sup>956</sup> *Top.* 103.

<sup>413</sup> *Top.* 103.

<sup>414</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 134; the Irish as virtually pagan, 139.

<sup>415</sup> Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, 5:14. On the image of a barbarian in Caesar, see Ndiaye, ‘L’altérité du ‘barbare’ germain,’ 46-66:49.

<sup>416</sup> *Top.*, O’Meara’s notes to the text, 15, pp. 130-131; Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 168.

is found throughout the sources on the northern barbarians. For example, Julius Caesar also speaks of the Suevi, a Germanic people, as having no clothes except skins ‘by reason of the scantiness of which a great part of the body is bare.’<sup>417</sup> Pomponius Mela tells us of the German men who go naked but for blankets for cover.<sup>418</sup> For these authors the nakedness of the barbarians is a symbol of their primitive lifestyle. Dio Cassius reinforces this image of wildness when he speaks of peripheral peoples as ‘living in tents without clothes or shoes.’<sup>419</sup>

To further emphasise this impression of barbarity, Gerald tells his readers that the Irish go naked into battle.<sup>420</sup> Gillingham suggests that ‘naked’ could mean that they are not wearing heavy armour.<sup>421</sup> However, it evokes the ancient stereotype of a barbarian warrior too. Julius Caesar described Britons who wore no clothes when going into battle in order to intimidate their enemies. According to Julius Caesar, the Britons dyed their bodies blue with woad to make themselves look terrifying.<sup>422</sup> In classical narrative, naked fighting is not unusual amongst barbarians. Tacitus suggests that the Germans fight naked or wear a little cloak: ‘A few only have corslets, and just one or two here and there a metal or leather helmet.’<sup>423</sup> Gildas, Britain’s own historian, whom Gerald is familiar with, referred to the unkempt hair and nakedness of the Irish and the Picts who were ‘readier to cover their villainous faces with hair than their private parts and neighbouring regions with clothes.’<sup>424</sup> In representing the Irish as savages, Gerald implies that the English conquest is necessary to bring the Irish closer to what he considers the civilised sphere of western Europe.

Unlike Adam’s contented and peaceful Swedes and Norwegians, the Irish in Gerald’s depiction are violent, treacherous, fickle and brutal: an image of the Irish known from ancient sources.<sup>425</sup> After the collapse of the Roman Empire, the Irish were involved in

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<sup>417</sup> Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, 4.1.

<sup>418</sup> Pomponius Mela, *De chorographia*, 3.3.

<sup>419</sup> Dio Cassius, *Dio's Roman History*, 77.12.

<sup>420</sup> ‘*nudi et inermes ad bella procedunt*,’ *Topographia Hibernie*, 162.

<sup>421</sup> Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 102.

<sup>422</sup> Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, 5:14.

<sup>423</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, 6.

<sup>424</sup> Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, M. Winterbottom (ed. and tr.) 19. On Gerald and Gildas, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 168-169.

<sup>425</sup> On the depiction of Irish as savages: James Muldoon, *Identity on the Medieval Irish Frontier: Degenerate Englishmen, Wild Irishmen, Middle Nations* (Gainesville, 2003) 63-102; Aidan Breen, ‘Embellishing History,’ *Irish Arts Review* 27, no.4 (2002) 104-107 (contains reproductions of illustrations from the *Topography*);



conquests and in creating new settlements in Britain and Gaul, which reinforced their reputation as savage warriors. Ammianus Marcellinus describes the Scoti [Irish] as wild people who, with the Picts and Attacotti, a warlike race of men, ‘were ranging widely and causing great devastation.’<sup>426</sup> He mentions the Scoti and Picts as ‘savage tribes’ who had broken the agreed peace.<sup>427</sup> Gildas describes the Irish (and Picts) as ‘exceedingly savage overseas nations.’<sup>428</sup> Paraphrasing Gildas, Gerald tells us the Irish are ‘neither strong in war nor reliable in peace.’<sup>429</sup> Gildas’ original quote refers to the Britons, whom he saw as fickle barbarians. Gerald now makes use of the citation in order to assign the Irish this role.<sup>430</sup>

Although Gerald points out that the Irish think it brave and honourable to fight unarmed, he describes three types of weapons they carry: spears, large axes and ‘two darts (in this they imitate the Basclenses).’<sup>431</sup> The latter reminds the reader of the Basque origins of the Irish, which Gerald uses to reinforce the claim of English sovereignty. The axe, on the other hand, Gerald claims, was introduced by the Ostmen.<sup>432</sup> He also tells us that from ‘old and evil custom they [the Irish] always carry an axe in their hand as if it were a staff.’<sup>433</sup> The axe can be used instantly: ‘in this way, if they have a feeling for any evil, they can the more quickly give it effect.’<sup>434</sup> Both the Irish and the Ostmen are barbarians in Gerald’s narrative: this tendency to hasty violence is a typical barbarian trait.<sup>435</sup> William of Malmesbury, in a similar vein,

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Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 58. On the Irish as the ‘other,’ see Annagret Simms, ‘Core and Periphery in Medieval Europe: The Irish Experience in a Wider Context,’ in W.J. Smith and K. Whelan (eds.), *Common Ground: Essays on the Historical Geography of Ireland* (1988) 22-40.

<sup>426</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus (*Res Gestae*), *The Roman History of Ammianus Marcellinus*, J. Rolfe (ed. and tr.), LCL 3 Vols. (Cambridge, MA., 1963-4) XXVII.8.5.

<sup>427</sup> *The Roman History of Ammianus Marcellinus*, J. Rolfe (ed. and tr.) XX.1.1. See also, Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 137.

<sup>428</sup> Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, M. Winterbottom (ed. and tr.) 14.

<sup>429</sup> *Top.* 99.

<sup>430</sup> Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, M. Winterbottom (ed. and tr.) 6.

<sup>431</sup> *Top.* 93.

<sup>432</sup> *Top.* 93. The axe was in use in Ireland since prehistoric times; Gerald probably means it was introduced as a weapon at this time. Boivin, *L’Irlande au Moyen Age*, 362. For further reading on axes and other weapons, see Sean Duffy, *Medieval Ireland: An Encyclopedia* (New York, 2005), 512-513 (entry by Andy Halpin).

<sup>433</sup> *Top.* 100.

<sup>434</sup> *Top.* 100.

<sup>435</sup> See for example, *The Roman History of Ammianus Marcellinus*, J. Rolfe (ed. and tr.) XVI.12.44. See also Ralph W. Mathisen, ‘Violent Behaviour and the Construction of Barbarian Identity in Late Antiquity,’ in Harold A. Drake (ed.), *Violence in Late Antiquity, Perceptions and Practices* (Aldershot, 2006) 27-36.

depicts the pre-conquest English as rash and unthinking; they run along with fury rather than military skill.<sup>436</sup>

In one example in *The Conquest of Ireland* Gerald presents us with an image of the king of Leinster, Diarmait MacMurrough, who changes into something akin to a cannibal.<sup>437</sup> The story of Diarmait is related to the events that came to be the beginning of the conquest. When dispossessed by a rival, Diarmait solicited help from the English King Henry II to regain his lands. Whilst Gerald describes Diarmait as a tyrant who ‘oppressed his nobles,’ and ‘treated his nobles harshly and brought to prominence men of humble rank,’ he is at the same time shown as a prince equal to other men of rank, not only in his own country but in England and France.<sup>438</sup> When the Earl of Strigoil promises him help, it is in return for the hand in marriage of Diarmait’s eldest daughter. It is only after his return to Ireland, after a bloody battle with much slaughtering of his enemies, that Gerald reveals a yet another side of his character:

groups of Irish foot soldiers immediately beheaded with their large axes those who had been thrown to the ground by the horsemen. In this way the victory was won, and about two hundred heads of his enemies were laid at Diarmait’s feet. When he had turned each one over and recognized it, out of an excess of joy he jumped three times in the air with arms clasped over his head, and joyfully gave thanks to the Supreme Creator as he loudly revelled in his triumph. He lifted up to his mouth the head of one he particularly loathed, and taking it by the ears and hair, gnawed at the nose and cheeks—a cruel and most inhuman act.<sup>439</sup>

Gerald paints a vivid and shocking image of an Irish leader, which recalls the ancient image of the Irish as cannibals.<sup>440</sup> In classical narrative, cannibalism was ‘a favourite insult aimed at the Irish.’<sup>441</sup> Gerald is aware of these representations. He has read Solinus, who describes Ireland as ‘inhuman in the savage rituals of its inhabitants;’

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<sup>436</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, iii.245.

<sup>437</sup> Gerald refers to Diarmait as Prince of Leinster whilst Henry II calls him a king. Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, notes p. 290, footnote 14. In the *Topography* he refers to ‘Irish kings,’ although in a disrespectful manner. *Top* 92.

<sup>438</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I, 1; I, 6. For a balanced portrait of Diarmait, see Martin, ‘Ireland in the Time of St. Bernard, St. Malachy, St. Laurence O’Toole,’ 1-35:6-8.

<sup>439</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I, 4.

<sup>440</sup> Scully, ‘Christians, Pagans and Barbarians,’ 49-62:55; Scully, ‘At World’s End; Scotland and Ireland in the Graeco-Roman Imagination,’ 164-170: 168. See also Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200*, 173.

<sup>441</sup> Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World*, 35.

who are depicted as an unfriendly and warlike people; the victors smear the blood of their victims on their own faces 'and treat right and wrong as the same thing.'<sup>442</sup> Jerome, the influential church father, who claims to have met Irish people in Gaul in the early fifth century, also accused them of cannibalism:

I myself as a young man in Gaul saw the Atticoti [or Scoti] a British people, feeding on human flesh. Moreover, when they come across herds of pigs and cattle in the forests, they frequently cut off the buttocks of the shepherds and their wives, and their nipples, regarding these alone as delicacies.<sup>443</sup>

These are images that represent the ancient barbarian savage which Gerald resurrects in order to justify the conquest and colonisation. Gerald calls Diarmait's behaviour cruel and inhuman but when speaking of the carnage committed by the English, he relates it as matter of fact and does not seem affected by the massacre. He tells us how the English:

pursued the enemy, who had turned back in flight and were now scattered all over the plains, with such a massive slaughter that they killed five hundred and more there and then. And when they stayed their hands that were worn out by striking, countless others were hurled over the high cliffs into the sea.<sup>444</sup>

However, he finds the killing of some seventy prisoners barbarous and inhumane, but although this may be so he makes it clear to the reader that his reasoning behind calling this slaughter barbarous is practical; they could have received the city of Waterford itself or a vast sum of money for these men.<sup>445</sup> Gillingham does not believe Gerald to be quite as cynical as my thesis will have it, but argues that Gerald deplored the decision to kill the prisoners.<sup>446</sup> There is no right or wrong in this argument: how the reader interprets Gerald's reaction is influenced by the readers' subjective view of Gerald's character: either as a cold, calculating imperialist, or a more benign image.

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<sup>442</sup> Solinus, *Collectanea*, 22.2-6; Freeman (tr.) in *Ireland and the Classical World*, 87.

<sup>443</sup> Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum*, 2.7; Freeman (tr.) in *Ireland and the Classical World*, 99.

<sup>444</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I, 13.

<sup>445</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I, 13. On rules of war and their application in the border regions, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 138.

<sup>446</sup> John Gillingham, 'Conquering the Barbarians: War and Chivalry in Twelfth-Century Britain and Ireland,' *The Haskins Society Journal* 4 (1992) 67-84) reprint in *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 41-58:41-42.

## Gerald and the Irish Pastoral Way of Life

Gerald represents Ireland as a pastoral society with herds of cattle, just like Sweden and Norway in Adam's narrative, but for Gerald this is not praiseworthy, nor does it conjure up biblical images. To Gerald the very same agricultural practice that Adam praises is a sign of a lazy and unproductive population—for Gerald cultivation of land is an indicator of civilisation.<sup>447</sup> Gerald states that in Ireland 'there are no farmers to cultivate even the best land...The nature of the soil is not to be blamed, but rather the want of industry on the part of the cultivator.'<sup>448</sup> Gerald states that the Irish engage in raising cattle because they will not bother to till the land. Typically the barbarian in ancient narrative is a herdsman who moves with his flock. Classical narrative abounds with images of wandering peoples. Herodotus speaks of the Scythians as 'having no fortified towns, and living in wagons; they are accustomed to fight on horseback with bows and arrows and depend on cattle for their livelihood.'<sup>449</sup> Pomponius Mela describes the migrant Sarmatians as living without cities or fixed habitation, moving their possessions as they move to new pastures.<sup>450</sup> This mobility affects all areas of the barbarians' life. In Dauge's analysis, the barbarian in Graeco-Roman accounts is characterised not just by his constant physical moving from place to place, but also by a moral mobility which manifests itself in sexual excess, fickleness and existential mobility: characteristics that Gerald applies to the Irish.<sup>451</sup>

Gerald's Irish are herdsmen; he describes them as 'given only to leisure, and devoted only to laziness, they think that the greatest pleasure is not to work, and the greatest wealth is to enjoy liberty.'<sup>452</sup> The picture of pre-conquest England in William of Malmesbury's account of that country also gives an impression of a lazy people, who were only interested in their own pleasure: 'the nobles abandoned to gluttony and lechery.'<sup>453</sup> He comments how before the Norman invasion the English lived in 'small mean houses and wasted their entire substance,' and also that 'it is ingrained in that

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<sup>447</sup> Montañó, *The Roots of English Colonialism in Ireland*, 35-36.

<sup>448</sup> *Top.* 93.

<sup>449</sup> Herodotus, *The Histories*, 4.46.

<sup>450</sup> Pomponius Mela, *De chorographia*, 3.4.

<sup>451</sup> Dauge, *Le Barbare*, 433. On barbarian characteristics, see also Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*, 40; Joseph Vogt, *Kulturwelt und Barbaren: zum Menschheitsbild der spätantiken Gesellschaft* (Mainz, 1967) 27.

<sup>452</sup> *Top.* 93.

<sup>453</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, iii.245.

nation to dote on wassail rather than wealth.<sup>454</sup> However, as regards agriculture, Malmesbury compares Ireland unfavourably to England and France. He writes that:

the Irish soil lack all advantages, and so poor, or rather unskilful, are its cultivators that it can produce only a ragged mob of rustic Irishmen outside the towns, the English and French, with their more civilised way life, live in towns, and carry on trade and commerce.<sup>455</sup>

These are views that concur with Gerald's: to Gerald the refusal to use the full potential of the land suggests that the Irish are uncivilised.<sup>456</sup> It also marks the land out as having great potential for colonisers.<sup>457</sup> To Gerald, the Irish have not evolved from a primitive type of lifestyle. He charts what he sees as the normal progression of society:

While man usually progresses from the woods to the fields, and from the fields to settlements and communities of citizens, this people despises work on the land, had little use for the money-making towns, contemns the right and privileges of citizenship and desire neither to abandon nor lose respect for, the life which it has been accustomed to lead in the woods and countryside.<sup>458</sup>

Gerald is echoing very ancient ideas of cultural, social and economic progress.<sup>459</sup> The Greeks saw this progress of mankind as going from a Golden Age, through Silver, Bronze, the Heroic Age, to the Iron Age. The Golden Age represents an idyllic era of pastoral living. These ideas appear in Hesiod's poem *Work and Days*.<sup>460</sup> Ovid's *Metamorphosis* modified the antique version slightly and speaks of the four stages of mankind.<sup>461</sup> Varro's book on farming from the first century AD expresses the same ideas. It relates man's move from primitive to civilised society in a series of stages,

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<sup>454</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, iii.245. Gillingham argues that for Malmesbury the world was divided between civilised and barbarian, see Gillingham, 'Conquering the Barbarians,' 41-58:43.

<sup>455</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, V.409. See also David, 'Looking East and West,' 48.

<sup>456</sup> On Gerald's depiction of Irish society as pastoral and backwards: Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 132; Jones, 'England against the Celtic Fringe,' 155-171:160; Phillips, 'The Outer World of the European Middle Ages,' 23-63: 51; Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 46; Leersson, *Mere Irish & Fíor-ghael*, 37.

<sup>457</sup> Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 106.

<sup>458</sup> *Top*. 93.

<sup>459</sup> Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 145.

<sup>460</sup> Hesiod, *Work and Days*, Hugh G. Evelyn-White (tr.) LCL (Cambridge, MA., 1914) 119-120; Lovejoy and Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, 27.

<sup>461</sup> Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, David Raeburn (tr.) with intro. by Denis Feeney (London, 2004) 1.89-150.

from the primitive Golden Age to pastoral living and to agriculture.<sup>462</sup> When Gerald brings up this ancient idea of the progress of mankind as a philosophical question these ideas had, according to Kramer, laid dormant for a long period of time as late antique, patristic and early medieval Christian writers had no interest in them. The Bible does not follow the same clear line of progress of living from the gifts of nature as hunter-gatherers, to herds, and to agriculture. In the Bible, Adam's son Cain tilled the soil and later generations lived from their herds, thus turning the whole concept upside down.<sup>463</sup> We have noted how Adam idealises the pastoral lifestyle. Kramer argues that it was not until the twelfth century that an author—Gerald of Wales—again expounded on Varro's exposition on the progress of civilisation.<sup>464</sup> Gerald's aim in highlighting these ideas is to make the Irish look primitive: a wood dweller is akin to a wild person.<sup>465</sup> In contrast to Adam, who paints a blissful picture of pastoral society, to Gerald this lifestyle is a hindrance to progress.<sup>466</sup> Gerald mentions this same 'lazy' attitude of the Irish relating to trade.<sup>467</sup> This complete lack of interest in business and trade makes Gerald exclaim that 'the Irish, through their vice of innate laziness...did not bother to sail the seas or have much truck with commerce.'<sup>468</sup> Again this is the image of the irrational, disorganised barbarian.

### **Gerald and the Social Organisation of the Irish**

Like Adam's Sweden, Gerald's Ireland is ruled by kings. The most prominent is the high king of the entire island. Gerald mentions the first and the last of these high kings. Sianus was the first 'sole king of the whole of Ireland,' Rothericus the last.<sup>469</sup> Herimon, of Milesian ancestry, was the first king of the Irish that now inhabit the island.<sup>470</sup> Gerald tells us that in all there were one hundred and eighty-one Irish

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<sup>462</sup> Marcus Terentius Varro, *On Farming*, Lloyd Storr-Best (tr.) (London, 1912) Book II, 1; Fritz L. Kramer, 'Eduard Hahn and the End of the 'Three Stages of Man,' *Geographical Review* 57, no. 1 (1967) 73-89:73.

<sup>463</sup> Kramer, 'Eduard Hahn and the End of the 'Three Stages of Man,' 73-89:75-76.

<sup>464</sup> Kramer, 'Eduard Hahn and the End of the 'Three Stages of Man,' 73-89:76-77.

<sup>465</sup> On forests as locations for the uncivilised see: Robert Pogue Harrison, *Forests: The Shadow of Civilisation* (Chicago, 1992) 61f; Joep Leerssen, 'Wildness, Wilderness, and Ireland: Medieval and Early-Modern patterns in the Demarcation of Civility,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56 (1995) 25-39; Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*, 56.f

<sup>466</sup> Montañó, *The Roots of English Colonialism in Ireland*, 34-36; Ashe, *Fiction and History in England*, 1066-1200, 177.

<sup>467</sup> Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 10-11.

<sup>468</sup> *Top.* 117.

<sup>469</sup> *Top.* 89, 118.

<sup>470</sup> *Top.* 119.

monarchs in Ireland from the first to the last.<sup>471</sup> The presence of a high king does not necessarily mean unity and stable rule; Gerald speaks of a large number of petty kings in *The Conquest of Ireland*, which starts with a tale of an abduction and feuds between kings.<sup>472</sup> For Gerald these kings had all gained their kingship by force of arms, and not through any ceremony or coronation, unlike Henry II, who had papal sanction for his invasion and conquest of the island.

To illustrate his view of these petty Irish kings Gerald relates a tale of bestial intercourse as means of conferring kingship where a king has public intercourse with a mare, which after the ceremony is slaughtered and cooked.<sup>473</sup> It is one of the scenes from Gerald's narrative that is also illustrated in some of the manuscripts, further reinforcing the image of uncivilised behaviour.<sup>474</sup> For instance, we see the king sitting in a huge tub where the meat is cooked, holding a piece of meat in his hands, whilst Gerald describes the scene as the king drinking from the broth by 'dipping his mouth into it round about him,' that is, drinking in a manner of an animal.<sup>475</sup> The words and image work together however, and creates an impression of barbarism. As Cleaver reminds us, the image of the king in the bath underlines the barbarism of the Irish as it prompts comparisons to the baptism of Christian kings: the large vessels used during the baptismal ceremony bear a resemblance to big cooking pots.<sup>476</sup> Thus the image presented by Gerald is both barbaric and anti-Christian. Other historians have examined the possibility of this story being an authentic ancient ritual.<sup>477</sup> Boivin points out that if there had been an ancient ritual of union between king and land of this kind, it is improbable that it had survived until the twelfth century.<sup>478</sup> Her argument is reinforced by FitzPatrick who has written about royal inauguration rites in Gaelic Ireland as observed by Tudor administrators—presuming that rites follow a traditional

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<sup>471</sup> Top. 119.

<sup>472</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I.1. The historical notes in the *Expugnatio* speak of 'a usual pattern of disputes, bloody family squabbles, dynastic killings,' p. 355, note 488.

<sup>473</sup> Top. 102. The chapter is entitled: 'A new and outlandish way of confirming kingship and dominion.'

<sup>474</sup> Michelle P. Brown, 'Marvels of the West: Giraldus Cambrensis and the Role of the Author in the Development of Marginal Illustration,' in A.S.G. Edwards (ed.), *Decoration and Illustration in Medieval English Manuscripts* (London, 2002) 34-59:52. Illustrations of the ritual exist in all surviving illustrated copies. It is most clearly preserved in the NL MS 700. The British Royal MS 13 (although probably earlier) is less well executed.

<sup>475</sup> Top. 102.

<sup>476</sup> Cleaver, 'Kings Behaving Badly,' 151-160:152.

<sup>477</sup> Marie-Louise Sjoestedt, *Celtic Gods and Heroes* (London, 1949) intro xvii-xix, saw proof of the authenticity of the rite in the similarity between Gerald's story and a Hindu ritual where the king's wife simulates a union with the horse.

<sup>478</sup> Boivin, *L'Irlande au Moyen Age*, 365.

pattern that remains unchanged. They involve the king surrendering royal attire—which may include a horse—in order to wear a simple robe, sometimes ritual bathing, drinking rituals and feasting.<sup>479</sup> Gerald is thus perhaps distorting a royal ceremony, not just blurring the line between man and animal, but making the king a beast.<sup>480</sup>

This image of a barbaric unchristian inauguration rite in relation to a king stands in great contrast to Gerald's representation of Henry II, who was at the time, in Gerald's account of the English invasion, conquering Ireland on behalf of the church. Throughout the *Topography* Henry II is depicted in the mould of Alexander the Great or Julius Caesar: 'Our western Alexander, you have stretched your arm from the Pyrenean mountains even to these far western bounds of the northern ocean.'<sup>481</sup> Gerald writes about Henry: 'Truly you are a king and conqueror, ruling your courage by your virtue, and conquering your anger with your temperance.'<sup>482</sup> Gerald explains that internal conflict made Henry postpone his 'eastern victories in Asia and Spain,' which Henry had already decided on to extend the faith of Christ.<sup>483</sup> The eastern victories that Gerald mentions may well refer to the ultimate goal of the Age of Crusade: the reconquest of Jerusalem. Ultimately Henry was a disappointment to Gerald.<sup>484</sup> However, there is a huge contrast between the kings of Ireland and Henry in Gerald's narrative.

In Gerald's narratives, all the Irish kings who submitted to Henry II on his visit to Ireland in 1171 are made to seem small and insignificant in comparison to Henry. Gerald writes of 'the spontaneous surrender and protestation of fealty of the Irish chiefs—for everyone is allowed to renounce his right.'<sup>485</sup> In Gerald's depiction, the Irish kings are described as 'the petty Western kings' whereas Henry is likened to Jupiter, the most powerful of the Roman gods. This is not to imply that Henry is a polytheist, only a comment on his mighty power: 'for when Jupiter started thundering in the confines of the western ocean, the petty Western kings were frightened by the

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<sup>479</sup> Elizabeth FitzPatrick, *Royal Inauguration in Gaelic Ireland c. 1100-1600: A Cultural Landscape Study* (Woodbridge, 2004) 6f.

<sup>480</sup> Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 49. See also Bernheimer, *Wild men in the Middle Ages*, 6f., who investigates the borderline position of the wild man, human/animal in medieval literature.

<sup>481</sup> *Top.* 121.

<sup>482</sup> *Top.* 122.

<sup>483</sup> *Top.* 122.

<sup>484</sup> Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 53.

<sup>485</sup> *Top.* 92.



thunder and averted the stroke of the thunderbolt by sheltering from it in peace.<sup>486</sup> At the very end of the narrative Gerald again comments on the surrender of the Irish kings: ‘how the petty kings of the West immediately flew to your command as little birds by the light of your coming.’<sup>487</sup> Gerald uses similar words in *The Conquest of Ireland* when he cites Merlin Sylvester of Celidon, whom Gerald believed was a Scottish bard at the time of King Arthur: ‘the birds of the island will flock to his lantern, and the larger among them, with their wings ablaze, will fall to the ground and be caught.’<sup>488</sup> Gerald makes clear that the English invasion will succeed as it is foretold in this prophecy and others, which he cites in *The Conquest of Ireland*, a book which has the alternative title ‘A Prophetic History.’

Two Irish kings get a specific mention in the *Topography*. We have seen how Gerald mentions Rothericus, the last high king of Ireland, in the context of immoral conduct at his court. Another king named in the *Topography* is Duvenaldus, King of Ossary.<sup>489</sup> He had been one of the foremost opponents to Henry before submitting to his rule.<sup>490</sup> Gerald makes this staunch opponent to English supremacy interpret the appearance of a frog—an animal not native to Ireland according to Gerald—as an omen bringing bad news to Ireland; it ‘was a sure sign of the coming of the English and the imminent conquest and defeat of his people.’<sup>491</sup> Here Gerald describes Duvenaldus as a wise king as he foresees that the Irish will be conquered, an implicit political statement involving a former adversary of Henry.<sup>492</sup> In this way Gerald again undermines the Irish claim to sovereignty.

The uncertainty of kingship also reflects itself in a general manner in society. In a contrast to Adam’s depiction of a society governed by assemblies in which all men have a vote and live in equality, Gerald describes a society filled with insecurity and distrust:

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<sup>486</sup> *Top.* 92.

<sup>487</sup> *Top.* 122.

<sup>488</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, I.33. On Merlin Sylvester, see Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, p. 313, footnote 161. In the *Journey through Wales*, 2.8, Gerald speaks of two Merlins; one during the time of Vortigen (king Arthur’s era), another is Merlin Celidonius, so called as he prophesied in the Caledonian forest.

<sup>489</sup> *Top.* 25. Duvenaldus’ court also houses a bearded lady, *Top.* 53. See Mittman, ‘The Other Close at Hand: Gerald of Wales and the ‘Marvels of the West,’’ 97-112:99.

<sup>490</sup> Boivin, *L’Irlande au Moyen Age*, 310.

<sup>491</sup> *Top.* 25.

<sup>492</sup> Lennon, *Irish Orientalism*, 41.

above any other peoples they always practise treachery. When they give their word to anyone, they do not keep it. They do not blush or fear to violate every day the bond of their pledge and oath given to others—although they are very keen that it should be observed with regard to themselves.<sup>493</sup>

The Irish, Gerald claims, find many ways of being treacherous. Treachery or fickleness is a general charge against the barbarian in the Graeco-Roman sources.<sup>494</sup> For example, Sallust depicts the Numidians, an African people, as fickle and treacherous.<sup>495</sup> Gerald claims that the Irish lure people to holy places under false pretences, and make oaths which they then break. He gives us detailed depictions of such events: ‘under the guise of religion,’ the people ‘assemble at some holy place with whom they wish to kill,’ to make treaties and swear oaths.<sup>496</sup> On occasion they drink each other’s blood, which conveys a suggestion of cannibalism. Often on these occasions bloodshed follows:

When they are alive they are relentlessly driven to death. When they are dead and gone, vengeance is demanded for them. If these people have any loyalty it is kept only for foster children and foster brothers.<sup>497</sup>

The fostering that Gerald referred to meant that a child was brought up by others than his own parents, for a specified period. It could be done for affection, for a fee or to strengthen bands of loyalty between kin.<sup>498</sup> It often caused children to have stronger ties of loyalty to their foster parents than their biological parents, as Gerald observed. Loyalty to your own birth family was then not to be taken for granted.<sup>499</sup> Gerald warns his readers to be on their guard against the Irish people. He warns against their treachery, their wile, shrewdness and betrayals.<sup>500</sup>

What Gerald calls the ‘pest of treachery’ had grown so strong and is so natural to the inhabitants of the nation that, he warns ‘foreigners coming into this country almost

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<sup>493</sup> Top. 99.

<sup>494</sup> Dauge, *Le Barbare*, 433-434; Vogt, *Kulturwelt und Barbaren*, 27.

<sup>495</sup> Sallust, *The War Against Jugurtha*, 46.3.

<sup>496</sup> Top. 101.

<sup>497</sup> Top. 101.

<sup>498</sup> T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Irish and Welsh Kinship* (Oxford, 1993) 78-82; Bhreathnach, *Ireland in the Medieval World*, 90-93.

<sup>499</sup> John Gillingham, ‘Killing and Mutilating Political Enemies in the British Isles from the Late Twelfth Century to the Early Fourteenth Century: A Comparative Study,’ in Brendan Smith, *Britain and Ireland 900-1300, Insular Responses to Medieval European Change* (Cambridge, 1999) 114-134:116.

<sup>500</sup> Top. 99. Rambo, *Colonial Ireland in English Medieval Literature*, 32.

invariably are contaminated by this, as it were, inborn vice of the country—a vice that is most contagious.’<sup>501</sup> We can recall that for Gerald the land Ireland was akin to a paradise; thus by contrast the barbarity of the population is emphasised: ‘we witness a filthy people contaminating their otherwise pristine surroundings.’<sup>502</sup> Gerald believes that a stranger can be tainted by the mere association with the Irish: ‘This place finds people already accursed or makes them so.’<sup>503</sup> Gerald, as representing the colonial power, did his best to destroy the image of holiness and sanctity created by Bede.<sup>504</sup>

### **Conclusion:**

Both Adam and Gerald use ancient classical stereotypes for their representations of the populations they describe. Their depictions provide sharp contrasts. Where, for Adam, the pastoral lifestyle of the Swedes and Norwegians evokes Old Testament images, monasticism and holy simplicity of living, Gerald sees the same lifestyle as lazy and unproductive. Adam writes with respect of the social organisation in Sweden, of assemblies where decisions are communal, where everyone has a voice. Gerald’s Irish kings are treated as insignificant, with no legal rights to their country compared to Henry’s rule, which is sanctioned by the papacy. Adam’s Swedes and Norwegians are presented as ideals of piety and simple living, even as polytheists they are in possession of what for Adam is Christian qualities. They are also of great eschatological importance; their conversion would lead to fulfilment of prophesy: world salvation. Gerald has no such thoughts of the Irish. His depiction of the Irish is from the point of view of a coloniser. Following St Bernard, he depicts the Irish as primitive and barbaric. Where St Bernard also described the change in the Irish after the success of the reform movement, Gerald cannot admit that reform has taken place as the need for reform is part of his justification for the conquest. To Gerald the Irish are treacherous, blood-thirsty, and immoral: the stereotypical negative view of barbarians from ancient narratives.

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<sup>501</sup> *Top.* 101. This idea is reminiscent of accounts of travellers in the Orient having to guard themselves against negative influence from the local population, see Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1979) Ch. iv.

<sup>502</sup> Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 61.

<sup>503</sup> *Top.* 101.

<sup>504</sup> Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 58.

## Chapter 4

### Adam's and Gerald's Strange and Monstrous Peoples

#### Introduction

This chapter will explore Adam's and Gerald's use of an ancient *topos* of monstrous and strange peoples to forward their respective agendas. Ancient narrative placed peoples that differed from the human norm on the periphery of the world, an approach that mirrored the concurrent belief in wonders and unusual wildlife in these regions, as discussed in the second chapter of this thesis.<sup>1</sup> Sweden, Norway and Ireland were all thought to be such world's end locations. For Adam the presence of the monstrous and strange peoples on the periphery of Sweden emphasises that this region is the last place on earth and a reminder of the call to spread Christianity to the limit of the earth in order to achieve world salvation. He sees the monstrous peoples as humans in need of conversion in order to fulfil scriptural prophecy, in the same way as the Swedes and Norwegians that inhabit the more central locations of these regions are potential Christians who must be converted to fulfil these prophecies too. For Gerald, monstrous individuals among the Irish are a reflection of the sinfulness of the Irish, a sign that church reform is needed; a view that reinforces his colonial agenda and provides further justification of the English conquest.

The Hereford map (c 1300), although later than Adam's and Gerald's work, reflects classical and medieval ideas of the monstrous or strange peoples. On this map we find depictions and descriptions of peoples that are different in appearance from the human norm, for example with exaggerated shape or form, or those that appear to be half-man half-animal, inhabiting the entire periphery of the world but most noticeably on the southern periphery.<sup>2</sup> Many of these physically divergent peoples are described by Pliny

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<sup>1</sup> Early specialist sources: Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, Friedman, 'Monsters and the Earth's Imagined Corners,' 41-64; Mittman and Kim, *Inconceivable Beasts: The Wonders of the East in the Beowulf Manuscript*; Mittman, 'Are the "Monstrous Races" Races'?' 36-51; Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills (eds.), *The Monstrous Middle Ages* (Cardiff, 2003); Alixe Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques in Medieval Manuscripts* (London, 2002); Claude Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne* (Paris, 1999); Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*, 41-59; L.A.J.R. Houwen (ed.), *Animals and the Symbolic in Medieval Art and Literature* (Groningen, 1997); K.E. Olsen and L.A.J.R. Houwen, *Monsters and the Monstrous in Medieval Northwest Europe* (Leuven, 2001); Naomi Reed Kline, 'The World of Strange Races,' in Leif Søndergård and Rasmus Thorning Hansen (eds.) *Monsters, Marvels and Miracles: Imaginary Journeys and Landscapes in the Middle Ages* (Odense, 2005) 27-40; Greta Austin, 'Marvelous people or Marvelous races? Race and the Anglo-Saxon Wonders of the East,' in Timothy S. Jones (ed.), *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imaginations* (Kalamazoo, 2002) 27-51; Bernheimer, *Wild men in the Middle Ages*, 86-93; Rudolf Wittkower, *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols* (London, 1987) 46-74.

<sup>2</sup> Mittman, *Maps and Monsters in Medieval England*, 40.

in his *Natural History*.<sup>3</sup> As Kline reports, the overriding theme is their deformities; the legends on the map relating to the depictions are non-judgemental, however, as Mittman explains, some of these denotations were probably read as negative.<sup>4</sup> Another group of divergent peoples are found in Scythia, in the northern periphery. Here some of the strange peoples do not differ from the human norm in appearance but are described as evil monsters, the Anthropophagi, for example, look human but are cannibals, which renders them monstrous.<sup>5</sup> Thus monstrous relates to weird and outlandish looks as well as those whose appearance falls within the human norm but whose behaviour is evil or monstrous. As the monstrous-looking peoples can be benign and those that look benign can be monstrous this renders the term 'monstrous' problematic, as the term is loaded with expectations of hideousness and horror. In his key work *The Monstrous Races* Friedman uses the word monstrous simply because this was the word commonly used for these peoples or individuals in the Middle Ages.<sup>6</sup> He also classifies some of them as 'noble savages,'—a term borrowed from a later era—applied to, for instance, the Amazons (mythical female warriors), indicating the respect with which some of these peoples were regarded.<sup>7</sup> Kline uses the term 'strange and monstrous,' as will this thesis, a less loaded term.<sup>8</sup>

In the Middle Ages, the term 'monsters' and 'monstrous' have many uses and definitions; as the 'other,' as prodigies or signs of events or of God's will, issues that will be addressed in this chapter. Of vital importance is the possible human status of these monstrous peoples, a subject of discussion in classical as well as medieval sources. The issue became particularly important in times of conversion when Christian missions approached the limit of the earth, regions where they expected to find these monstrous peoples. Were they to be regarded as human or non-human? If human they should by command of Christ be converted. Augustine's and Isidore of Seville's definition of humanity is especially relevant to this thesis, as is Ratramnus of Corby's ninth-century discussion on the possible human status of monstrous people, as they contextualise Adam's and Gerald's views.

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<sup>3</sup> Pliny, *NH*. Book 7.

<sup>4</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm* 151.

<sup>5</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm* 151.

<sup>6</sup> Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 163-177.

<sup>8</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 141.

Adam and Gerald are familiar with these strange divergent peoples from classical, late antique and medieval sources: Pliny, Solinus, Martianus Capella and Isidore of Seville as well as mythical narratives and fables like the *Alexander Romance* and medieval books on wonders.<sup>9</sup> Adam follows this ethnographic model linking remoteness and strangeness in Book IV of his *History* when he places strange and monstrous peoples in the mythical Rhiphaean Mountains—the name Adam applies to the Scandinavian mountain chain—on the periphery of Norway and Sweden. Here we find, according to Adam, Amazons, Cynocephali (Greek for dog-heads), Cyclops (Greek for round-eyed, they were one-eyed giants), Himantopodes ('strapfoot,' they have long weak legs) and Anthropophagi (Greek for people-eaters, they were cannibals).<sup>10</sup> Whist these people (to us) are from the realm of myth, the distinction between what is real or mythical is not necessarily valid in this era, as Mittman and Kim points out.<sup>11</sup> Gerald too embraces the *topos* of strange peoples when he includes two monstrous individuals that are half-man half-ox in his *Topography*, as well as relating a story of what Gerald refers to as a 'talking wolf.'<sup>12</sup> Before examining Adam's and Gerald's use of this *topos* of monstrous beings in remote locations separately, this chapter will briefly look at the origin of the tradition of placing strange peoples at the limit of the world, its transmission into the Middle Ages and its continuing interest for medieval writers like Adam and Gerald.

### **Adam and Gerald and the Ancient and Medieval Tradition of Populating the Periphery with Monstrous Beings**

When Adam and Gerald place monstrous beings on the periphery of the world they followed an ancient Western tradition. The monstrous beings were creations of fantasy and fable whose existence was both believed and doubted, inhabiting far away regions of climatic extremes. Herodotus seems to suggest a connection between climate and the edge of the world marvels.<sup>13</sup> Pliny, who wrote extensively on these peoples,

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<sup>9</sup> 'The Alexander Romance,' Ken Dowden (tr.) in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, B.P. Reardon (ed.) (California, 1989) 650-735.

<sup>10</sup> *AB* IV, xxv.

<sup>11</sup> Mittman and Kim, *Inconceivable Beasts: The Wonders of the East in the Beowulf Manuscript*, 173f.

<sup>12</sup> *Top.* 54, 52.

<sup>13</sup> On Herodotus hinting at climate as an explanation for edge of the world marvels, see Tim Rood, 'Herodotus and Foreign Lands,' in Carolyn Dewald, and John Marincola (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus* (Cambridge, 2006) 290-305:297. See for example Herodotus, *Histories*, 2.35, where he speaks of Egypt. He also refers to Scythia as having a severe climate in 4.28.

explained the strange shapes of the people and animals in the southern periphery as having been formed by the extreme heat of this location.<sup>14</sup> Monstrous peoples, just like other wonders, were directly associated with remote locations. The extremities of the world, Herodotus stated, possess that which is thought most beautiful and most rare.<sup>15</sup> Although classical sources locate most of the monstrous peoples in the southern periphery of the world—where also later medieval world maps place the largest share of them—they also inhabit the north, as evident in both Herodotus and Pliny, and as depicted on the medieval *mappae mundi*.<sup>16</sup> In Homer's *Odyssey*, one of the earliest known narratives from western civilisation, we meet fabulous and monstrous peoples on the periphery of the world.<sup>17</sup> Following Homer, authors wrote accounts of fictive journeys to extraordinary locations, mentioning strange peoples in distant places.<sup>18</sup> Many of the earliest ancient sources are fragmentary: only short extracts of Greek and Roman works have survived through being copied into later compilations. The largest and most influential compilation is Pliny's *Natural History* which includes an account of divergent peoples living on the periphery. These 'Plinian races,' as Friedman refers to them, include the Anthropophagi, Blemmyae (men with heads on their chests), Cynocephali, Giants, Cyclopes and Sciapods (Greek for shadow-feet, they were one-footed peoples).<sup>19</sup> Solinus helped the transmission of this tradition into late antiquity and beyond, as did Isidore of Seville.<sup>20</sup> From Solinus and Isidore of Seville, or directly from Pliny, the strange peripheral peoples found their way into works like the *Physiologus* and its medieval offspring, the bestiary, as well as medieval books on wonders that will be discussed below.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Pliny, *NH*. 6.35.

<sup>15</sup> Herodotus, *Histories*, 3.116.

<sup>16</sup> Majority of monstrous peoples in the south, see Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*, 41. Monstrous peoples in the north in Pliny, *NH*. 7.2; Herodotus, *Histories*, 3.116; 4.25. On *mappae mundi* and the monstrous peoples, see Mittman, *Maps and Monsters in Medieval England*, 39-41.

<sup>17</sup> Homer, *Odyssey*, Cyclopes, IX, 109; the Lotus Eaters, IX, 78; the Giant Laestrygonians, X, 82, 112-122: Sirens whose sweet singing lure men to their death, XII, 45; the many-headed monster Scylla, XII, 84. See also: Hartog, *Memories of Odysseus: Frontier Tales from Ancient Greece*; D. Felton, 'Rejecting and Embracing the Monstrous in Ancient Greece and Rome,' in Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous* (Farnham, 2012) 103-131:118-122.

<sup>18</sup> Two important sources for transmission of the exotic travel genre were Ctesias (early 5C BC), a doctor at the royal court of Persia, and Megasthenes (4C BC), Ptolemy II's ambassador to India. Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 19. For Ctesias see: *Ctésias, La Perse, L'Inde: Les summaries the Photius*, R. Henry (ed.) (Brussels, 1959); Wittkower, *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols*, 46-74: 46-47. On the sources for monstrous races, see Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 17-51.

<sup>19</sup> Pliny the Elder, *NH*. For human races in Pliny, see *The Elder Pliny on the Human Animal: Pliny Book 7* (intro. and notes, Mary Beagon) (Oxford, 2005); Mary Beagon, *Roman Nature: The Thought of Pliny the Elder* (Oxford, 1992). See also 'The Plinian Races,' in Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 5-25.

<sup>20</sup> Solinus, *Collectanea*; Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*.

<sup>21</sup> Transmission of the *Physiologus* from the classical world to medieval: Joyce E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (London, 1994) 88; Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 98-139. See also Richard E. Barber, *Dictionary of Fabulous Beasts* (London, 1971).

In the Middle Ages, many works on ethnography and geography included these strange or monstrous peoples, for example Rabanus Maurus' *De Universo* (842–846), Honoré of Augsburg's *Imago mundi* (c 1123) and the English 'Wonders of the East' (eleventh and twelfth centuries).<sup>22</sup> The third section of Gervase of Tilbury's *Otia Imperiali* is filled with marvels and strange peoples.<sup>23</sup> The story of Alexander the Great's conquest of the east, the *Alexander Romance*, which enjoyed immense and durable success after it was translated from Greek into Latin c. 953, popularised the strange and monstrous peoples in the west.<sup>24</sup> They are also included on world maps such as the Hereford and the Ebstorf *mappae mundi*, as well as the earlier Anglo-Saxon Cotton Map.<sup>25</sup> These maps sum up classical and medieval ideas on the monstrous peoples, applicable to Adam and Gerald.

Gerald's inclusion of the monstrous in his *Topography's* section on wonders and miracles was a response to an increased curiosity about the strange and marvellous which had begun with the twelfth century renaissance.<sup>26</sup> Stories from pilgrims and crusaders returning home from the Holy Land rekindled an interest in strange and monstrous peoples thought to inhabit distant lands.<sup>27</sup> Gerald was evidently influenced by medieval books of wonders. In the introduction to his second book of the *Topography*, 'The Miracles and Wonders of Ireland,' he refers to marvels of the east and to his ambition to write a similar work about the west:<sup>28</sup>

just as the Marvels of the East have through the work of certain authors come to the light of public notice, so the marvels of the West, which so far, have remained hidden

<sup>22</sup> *Imago mundi* was translated into German c 1190. Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 26. Honoré of Augsburg is also known as Honorius of Autun. Rabanus' *De rerum naturis* is also known as *De universo*. For more on this work see E. Heyse, *Hrabanus Maurus' Enzyklopädie 'De rerum naturis': Untersuchungen zu den Quellen und zur Methode der Kompilation* (Münich, 1969); Winfried Wilhelmy, *Rabanus Mauros, Auf den Spuren eines karolingischen Gelehrten* (Mainz, 2006); Austin, 'Marvelous people or Marvelous races? Race and Anglo-Saxon Wonders of the East,' 27-51.

<sup>23</sup> *Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, S.E. Banks and J. W. Binns (tr. and ed.).

<sup>24</sup> On the success and transmission of the Alexander Romance, see Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 31f. For comments on an English medieval version of the work, see Andy Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies, Studies in Monsters of the Beowulf Manuscript* (Toronto, 1995) 116-139, which contains an appendix with the text.

<sup>25</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought; The Hereford Paradigm*; Westrem, *The Hereford Map*; Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*; Mittman, *Maps and Monsters in Medieval England*; Chekin (ed.), *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography*, Ebstorf Map, 146-161, Hereford Map, 161-169, Anglo-Saxon Cotton Map, 129.

<sup>26</sup> Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity*, 38. See also Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*, 41.

<sup>27</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 146.

<sup>28</sup> Karl Steel, 'Centaurs, Satyrs, and Cynocephali: Medieval Scholarly Teratology and the Question of the Human,' in Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous* (Farnham, 2012) 257-274:261-262.



away and almost unknown, may eventually find in me one to make them known even in these later days.<sup>29</sup>

Adam, on the other hand, wrote before this medieval period of significantly intensified interest in the strange and marvellous. It is not clear that Adam has read earlier medieval sources for monstrous peoples like the *Alexander Romance*, Ratramnus of Corbie's letter (which will be discussed later) or Rabanus Mauro's *De Universo*. A scholium in Adam's work that contains information from the *Alexander Romance* was added after his time.<sup>30</sup> Adam's monstrous peoples are cited from works of Pliny, Solinus, and Martianus Capella, the latter a school book incorporating material from ancient sources regarding the monstrous peoples, many in the south but some also placed in the north. Adam had oral sources on the 'normal' peoples of the north, for instance the king of Denmark as well as Hamburg-Bremen bishops returning from the north, but if these sources also relayed information on monstrous or strange peoples that Adam describes as living in the area is not clear.

Adam's decision to include the strange and monstrous peoples was not common amongst the northern German chroniclers. Other authors from the same region, who like Adam were writing church histories in this era, failed to mention that the faraway northern regions were inhabited by monstrous peoples. The earlier northern German chronicler Thietmar of Merseburg (d. 1018), for example, was fascinated by the marvels of the nature of the north, yet did not mention that the population of the region was also unusual, nor were the monstrous peoples included in Helmold of Bosau's twelfth-century chronicle.<sup>31</sup> Outside of this area, a ninth-century account by a Norwegian merchant, Ohthere, describing a journey along the Norwegian coast to the White Sea, does not refer to them either.<sup>32</sup> However, the German chroniclers did not have Adam's particular interest in ethnography or geography which could account for their failure to include them. Ohthere, on the other hand, probably lacked a classical education. His brief account relates to what he has seen and experienced himself.

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<sup>29</sup> *Top.* 33.

<sup>30</sup> Schol. 123 mention Amazons.

<sup>31</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg; *The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg*, 7.39; Helmold of Bosau, *Helmoldi presbyteri bozoviensis chronica slavorum*, Bernhard Schmeidler (ed.).

<sup>32</sup> Ohthere and Wulfstan, *Tollemache Orosius* (MS BL Additional 47967) in *The Old English Orosius*, Janet Bately (ed.).

Adam, in contrast to these writers, made a conscious choice to include the monstrous, an issue that will be discussed in this chapter.

### Adam and Gerald and the Implications of the Word Monstrous

Medieval writers use the word ‘monster’ (*monstrum*) to refer to strange peripheral peoples.<sup>33</sup> Adam refers to the peoples in the Rhiphaean Mountains as monsters.<sup>34</sup> He also uses the word when referring to polytheist Norwegians.<sup>35</sup> These terms could apply to either monstrous looks, as in the case of the monstrous peoples in the Rhiphaean Mountains, or monstrous behaviour, in reference to polytheists in Norway. Gerald uses the word in relation to a woman with a beard, and for ‘sea-monsters’ such as whales.<sup>36</sup> When describing the half human/half animal ox-men the term is implicit but not stated, although he does explicitly use the word for the ox-men in later recensions.<sup>37</sup> Gerald (but not Adam) also use the related word ‘prodigy,’ notably in the foreword to King Henry in the *Topography*, and in the first chapter of Book Two, where he uses ‘prodigies’ about the wonders and remarkable peculiarities of the Ireland.<sup>38</sup> He also uses the word for the woman who loved a goat, and a fish with gold teeth.<sup>39</sup>

‘Monster’ has many meanings and implications. It comes from the Latin term *monstrare* (to point out, to show); the related word *monstrum* means sign or portent.<sup>40</sup> Following ideas in earlier classical sources, Augustine, who had a huge impact on the formation of the medieval thought on the monstrous, applies the word to the divergent peripheral peoples but relates that monstrous individuals are also born into core human ‘normal’ populations. Augustine’s own examples of the latter include Hermaphrodites, and an individual that had the upper body of two people but only one pair of legs, a conjoined twin.<sup>41</sup> He characterises the monstrous peoples or individuals as potentially

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<sup>33</sup> Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 8. See also Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 109f.

<sup>34</sup> ‘*monstruosi hominum*,’ AB IV, xxv.

<sup>35</sup> AB II, Lvii.

<sup>36</sup> Top. 53. ‘A whale or some other monstrous sea animal (*Balaenam vel aliam marinam bellium monstruosam esse*).’ Top. 45.

<sup>37</sup> Top. 54. Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) (1905, Ontario, 2000) 2.21.

<sup>38</sup> Top. foreword to King Henry; Top. 33.

<sup>39</sup> Top. 56. ‘*Criminis infandi, prodigiosa creans*.’ Fish with gold teeth, Top. 43.

<sup>40</sup> *Monstro, monstrare*, Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*, at

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=monstro&la=la&can=monstro>; monstrum, signs or portents,

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=monstrum&la=la>

<sup>41</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 16.8. Discussions on Augustine’s view of the human status of the monstrous:

Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*, 49; Hayden White, ‘The forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea,’ in Edward Dudley and Maximilian E Novak (eds.), *The Wild Man Within: An Image in the Western Thought from*

rational and mortal humans as will be discussed further, ideas shared by Isidore of Seville.<sup>42</sup> Augustine explains they are called monsters because they demonstrate or signify something; they are portents of events to come.<sup>43</sup> Prodigies has a similar meaning. To Isidore of Seville ‘prodigies (*prodigium*) are so called, because they ‘speak hereafter’ (*porro dicere*), that is, they predict the future. But omens (*monstrum*) derive their name from admonition (*monitus*), because in giving a sign they indicate (*demonstrare*) something, or else because they instantly show (*monstrare*) what may appear.’<sup>44</sup> Isidore of Seville applied the word *monstrum* to the monstrous peoples; according to Friedman he is the first to do so.<sup>45</sup> Adam and Gerald use the monstrous peoples in dissimilar ways: Adam relates his monstrous peoples to the regular human inhabitants of the region whilst Gerald use this idea of the monstrous as signs or portents.

Modern scholars also discuss what defines a monstrous being as well as their meanings.<sup>46</sup> Both Cohen and Strickland sum up theories on the monstrous, which applies to any monstrous creation, from the ancient era to modern cinematic monsters.<sup>47</sup> The most significant characteristic in Strickland’s assessment is the defiance of the monstrous; they defy everything, and everything about them is mutable, from appearance to name.<sup>48</sup> Mittman also stresses this mutable quality of the monster: the monstrous asks us to ‘acknowledge the failure of our system of categorisation.’<sup>49</sup> We will see examples of this in both Adam’s and Gerald’s narratives. Of special

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*the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Pittsburgh, 1972) 3-38:17-18; David D. Gilmore, *Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and all Manner of Imaginary Terrors* (Philadelphia, 2003) 52-53; Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 119-121; Steel, ‘Centaur, Satyr, and Cynocephali,’ 257-274:266.

<sup>42</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 16. 8. Jennifer Neville, ‘Monsters and Criminals: Defining Humanity in Old English Poetry,’ in Karin Olsen and L.A.J.R. Houwen, *Monsters and the Monstrous in Medieval Northwest Europe* (Leuven, 2001) 103-122:106.

<sup>43</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 21.8. On monsters as signs or warnings see Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 108f; Mittman, *Maps and Monsters in Medieval England*, 105.

<sup>44</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XI.iii.3.

<sup>45</sup> Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 107-108.

<sup>46</sup> The role of strange peoples or individuals as ‘the other’ has been investigated by a number of authors, for example, Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*; Lesley Kordecki, ‘Losing the Monster and Recovering the Non-Human in Fable(d) Subjectivity,’ L.A.J.R. Houwen (ed.) *Animals and the Symbolic in Medieval Art and Literature* (Groningen, 1997) 25-38:26-28; Susan M. Kim, ‘“Man-Eating Monsters and Ants as Big as Dogs: The Alienated Language of the Cotton Vitellius A. XV “Wonders of the East,” in L.A.J.R. Houwen (ed.), *Animals and the Symbolic in Medieval Art and Literature* (Groningen, 1997) 39-51:40; David Williams, *Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Medieval Thought and Literature* (Exeter, 1996); Bruno Roy, ‘En marge du monde connu: les races de monstres,’ Guy. H. Allard (ed.), *Aspects de la marginalité au Moyen Age* (Montreal, 1974) 71-80; Mittman, *Maps and Monsters in Medieval England*, 147-177; Mittman, ‘“Are the “Monstrous Races” Races”?’ 36-51; Alexa Wright, *Monstrosity: The Human Monster in Visual Culture* (London, 2013) 10-11; Cohen, ‘Monster Culture (Seven Theses),’ 3-25.

<sup>47</sup> Cohen, ‘Monster Culture (Seven Theses),’ 3-25; Strickland, ‘Introduction: The Future is necessarily Monstrous,’ 1-13: 8-9.

<sup>48</sup> Strickland, ‘Introduction: The Future is necessarily Monstrous,’ 1-13: 11.

<sup>49</sup> Mittman, ‘Introduction: The Impact of Monsters and Monster Studies,’ 1-14:8.

significance for Adam's monstrous beings is Friedman's discussion on monstrous peoples that are idealised as noble and wise.<sup>50</sup>

### **The Monstrous Peoples: Do They Exist? Are they Human?**

Although Pliny was pleased to include the divergent peoples in his accounts as examples of the wonderful variety of humankind, other Graeco-Roman writers doubted their existence, or their human status.<sup>51</sup> Felton mentions a number of writers who expressed scepticism, polytheist as well as Christian, from Herodotus to Orosius.<sup>52</sup> Lucian poked fun at the genre of writing imaginary accounts of distant exotic lands in his second-century AD travel satire.<sup>53</sup> Tacitus, who idealised the northern barbarian—as Adam did at a later date—wrote of the exceedingly poor but happy and contented Fenni in the northern periphery, and reported that beyond them live the Hellusii and Oxiones, peoples with human faces but with limbs and bodies of beasts, although this, Tacitus assures us, has not been ascertained.<sup>54</sup> In the Christian era we see a similarly ambiguous approach to the monstrous peoples; they are included amongst humanity, whereas at the same time there a doubt of their existence. Augustine and Isidore of Seville demonstrate both these tendencies. Adam and Gerald respond in a similar manner.

Augustine tells us that the existence of the strange peripheral races should not be seen as surprising, as there are monstrous individuals born into the regular population: 'It ought not to seem absurd to us, that as in individual races there are monstrous births, so in the whole race there are monstrous races.'<sup>55</sup> Augustine describes a variety of peoples before coming to the conclusion that what divides man from non-human is that man is rational and mortal and descended from Adam, a key definition shared by Adam and Gerald.<sup>56</sup> Details like shape, form, colour, sound, movement, peculiarity of

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<sup>50</sup> Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 163-177.

<sup>51</sup> Pliny, *NH*. Book 7. On Pliny's views on monsters and peoples, see Neville, 'Monsters and Criminals: Defining Humanity in Old English Poetry,' 103-122:104-106.

<sup>52</sup> Felton, 'Rejecting and Embracing the Monstrous in Ancient Greece and Rome,' 103-131:123-124, 130.

<sup>53</sup> Lucian, 'A True Story,' in B.P. Reardon (intro and tr.) *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, B.P. Reardon (ed.) (California, 1989) 619-649.

<sup>54</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, 46.

<sup>55</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 16.8.

<sup>56</sup> Discussions on Augustine's view of the human status of the monstrous, see Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*, 49; White, 'The forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea,' 3-38:17-18; David D. Gilmore, *Monsters:*

his nature, are of no significance. If mortal and rational ‘no Christian can doubt that he springs from that one protoplast [Adam].’<sup>57</sup> He tells us not to be confused by appearance; God sometimes creates peoples that are unusual. To Augustine the monstrous exist as a proof of God’s power, faith in him will rendered the monstrous normal at resurrection.<sup>58</sup> Augustine appears to throw some doubt on the existence of the monstrous peoples when he asks ‘what shall I say of the Cynocephali, whose dog-like head and barking proclaim them beasts rather than men? But we are not bound to believe all we hear of these monstrosities.’<sup>59</sup> However, it is possible that it is not existence of the monstrous peoples Augustine doubts, but the human status of some of the strange peoples—in this case the Cynocephali—an issue he resolves by pointing mortality, rationality and descent from Adam. Following Augustine, Isidore of Seville presents similar concepts. He tells us that defective births and a strange appearance are not unnatural as ‘the nature of everything is the will of the Creator.’<sup>60</sup> He echoes the views of Augustine: ‘Just as, in individual nations there are instances of monstrous people, so in the whole of humankind there are certain monstrous races.’<sup>61</sup> He mentions Giants, Cynocephali, Cyclopes and others, without doubting their human status, adding that ‘other fabulous human monstrosities are told of, which do not exist but are concocted to interpret the causes of things.’<sup>62</sup> Interpreting causes refers to the monstrous as portents or signs, a model that Gerald follows.

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*Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and all Manner of Imaginary Terrors* (Philadelphia, 2003) 52-53; Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 119-121; Steel, ‘Centaur, Satyr, and Cynocephali,’ 257-274:266.

<sup>57</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 16. 8.

<sup>58</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 22.12. See Mittman, ‘Are the ‘Monstrous Races’ Races’? 36-51:45.

<sup>59</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 14.8.

<sup>60</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XI. iii.1. On God’s will and the significance of the monstrous, see Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 107-130.

<sup>61</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XI.iii.12.

<sup>62</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XI.iii.12, 13, 28.

## The Strange and Monstrous Beings in Adam's Narrative: Humans in Need of Conversion

According to Adam, the Rhiphaean Mountains, on the periphery of Sweden and Norway, are inhabited by monstrous and strange peoples: Amazons, Cynocephali, Cyclops, Himantopodes and Anthropophagi.<sup>63</sup> When Adam tells us that Norway 'finally has its bounds in the Rhiphaean Mountains, where the tired world also comes to an end,' he evidently positions Norway at the very limit of the world.<sup>64</sup> Although ancient narratives placed many of the monstrous peoples in the south, several of the peoples that Adam mentions are also associated with the north in these ancient narratives, in particular the Amazons and Cynocephali, which Adam writes about in detail.<sup>65</sup> The Cyclopes are well-known from Homer's *Odyssey*, where the one-eyed cave-dwelling giant Anthropophagus Polyphemus is depicted as what the translator renders as 'monstrous ogre.'<sup>66</sup> A story in Adam's *History* has Frisian travellers encountering 'amazingly tall men whom our people call Cyclops, also in a remote location, this time on an island in the Ocean.'<sup>67</sup> The adventure of Adam's Frisians faintly echoes that of Odysseus' meeting with the Laestrygonians; in both cases the city where the giants dwell is located on very high cliffs, and in both cases the visitors were chased back to the safety of the ships. Whilst the Laestrygonians devour the Odysseus companions, in Adam's account one of the Frisians was torn to pieces by exceedingly large dogs. The Cyclopes inhabiting the Rhiphaean Mountains and those encountered by the Frisians are both indicative of their remote peripheral location, as are the other strange peoples he mentions.

The Himantopode is different in looks, with no apparent negative character traits attached. Adam describes a Himantopode as hopping on one leg, whereas Solinius, his acknowledged source, depicts the Himantopodes as boneless creatures that slide on the

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<sup>63</sup> AB IV, xxv.

<sup>64</sup> AB IV, xxxi. Rhiphaean Mountains in Sweden: AB IV, xxi; xxv, in Norway.

<sup>65</sup> Amazons in Homer, *Iliad*, III, 189, VI, 186; also in Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.110-116 (33-35). On Amazons, see Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, 216-224; Josine H. Blok, *The Early Amazons, Modern and Ancient perspectives on a Persistent Myth* (Leiden, 1995); Adrienne Mayor, *The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women across the Ancient World* (Princeton, 2014). Cynocephali in the north: Paul the Deacon, *Langobardernas Historia*, I.11; Notker the Stammerer, Lewis Thorpe (tr.), *Life of Charlemagne*, II, 13.

<sup>66</sup> Homer, *Odyssey*, IX. On the inhospitable ways of the Cyclopes, see Hartog, *Memories of Odysseus*, 25; Fraesdorff, *Der Barbarische Norden*, 306-307; Bernheimer, *Wild men in the Middle Ages*, 86; Hodot and Jouin, 'Barbares, barbarismes et barbarie dans le monde gréco-romain,' 25-45:27.

<sup>67</sup> AB IV, xLi; Homer, *Odyssey*, X.

ground.<sup>68</sup> By not being particular about details, it is possible that Adam wants to suggest that it is not the individual characteristics that matter but the idea that these peoples mark the limit of the world. It is also consistent with the mutable character of the monstrous; ‘everything about them is mutable, from their appearances to their very names.’<sup>69</sup> There is also the Anthropophagi, a people often associated with Scythia.<sup>70</sup> Adam describes them: ‘those who delight in human flesh as food, and as they are shunned, so may they also rightfully be passed over in silence.’<sup>71</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, not known to have been read by Adam, also tells his readers they are to be avoided.<sup>72</sup> They are shunned because of their horrible character. On the Hereford map the inscription calls them ‘savage men, drinking blood, the sons of accursed Cain,’ then goes on to connect them with the people enclosed by Alexander: Gog and Magog who follow Antichrist and will carry out a persecution of the whole world.<sup>73</sup> On the Hereford map they are also described as living in ‘intolerable cold; the whole time there is the fiercest wind from the mountains.’<sup>74</sup> Although extremes of climate, both heat and cold, are responsible for creating monstrous people, in this case the location, as Friedman points out, appears ‘decreed by legend rather than climatic thinking.’<sup>75</sup> Adam’s depiction of the Rhiphaean Mountains themselves and their wildlife, as discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, does not inspire such feelings of horror or fear, but rather a fascination with its varied wildlife. Adam shares the horror of the cannibalistic Anthropophagi; he tells us he does not want to discuss them, yet by mentioning them he has accorded them notice in his narrative. He dealt with the polytheist rites in Sweden in a similar manner. His disgust at the manifold and unseemly incantations taking place during these rites at Uppsala makes him stop short of recording details: ‘it is better to keep silence about them.’<sup>76</sup>

When Adam writes about the strange peoples in Sweden, they are not afforded special treatment but are discussed alongside people that follow the norm, which implies that

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<sup>68</sup> AB IV, xxv; Solinus, *Collectanea*. 31.4. Himantopode: Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, ref. 15, p.

<sup>69</sup> Strickland, ‘Introduction: The Future is Necessarily Monstrous,’ 1-13: 11.

<sup>70</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 151.152. Anthropophagi: Pliny, *NH*. 7.2. Solinus places these peoples both in the north and in Ethiopia. Solinus, *Collectanea*, 30.7-8.

<sup>71</sup> AB IV, xxv.

<sup>72</sup> *The Roman History of Ammianus Marcellinus*, J. Rolfe (ed. and tr.) XXXI.15.

<sup>73</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 144, ref. 44.

<sup>74</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 144, ref. 44.

<sup>75</sup> Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 51-52, 58.

<sup>76</sup> AB IV, xxvii.

he regards them as rational beings, and potential Christians. In the same chapter, before mentioning these strange or monstrous peoples, he writes of the Swedish peoples living in the north of the country, the Skritefingi, the Goths, and the Wärmilani that we know as historically attested peoples without making a distinction between the two groups. As Mittman and Kim argues in relation to ‘real’ or ‘mythical’ people; ‘there is no hard line denoting the boundary beyond which we can say with certainty that we have crossed over into the realm of the myth.’<sup>77</sup> For Adam, there is no division between the two. After the list of the monstrous or strange peoples he relates that, according to the Danish king, people of small stature frequently invade Sweden from the northern region.<sup>78</sup> We see a similar approach in a later chapter when he tells us that Skritefingi inhabit the Rhiphaean Mountains, apparently alongside the monstrous peoples.<sup>79</sup> Earlier in his narrative, when citing Martianus Capella, Adam tells us of peoples inhabiting the Baltic region: ‘Getae, Dacians, Sarmatians, Alani, Neutri, Geloni, Anthropophagi and Troglodytes.’<sup>80</sup> This list is an almost perfect copy from Martianus Capella and consists of peoples from Adam’s era and peoples from classical and medieval historiography.<sup>81</sup> Some of these peoples mentioned by Martianus Capella are present in Herodotus, amongst a number of peoples that the Scythians were said to call for a conference.<sup>82</sup> This demonstrates the tradition of going back to ancient sources, as well as the classical inclination of placing the monstrous and regular populations on equal footing, a model followed by Adam. That he does not differentiate between the regular inhabitants and the monstrous peoples seems to indicate that Adam sees them as equal human beings. Adam calls the monstrous peoples ‘human monsters,’ or ‘monstrous humans’ (*monstruosi hominum*). Thus he appears to follow Augustine’s and Isidore of Seville’s model: that they are potentially human.<sup>83</sup>

On the east, Sweden touches the Rhiphaean Mountains, where there is an immense wasteland, the deepest snows, and where hordes of human monsters (*monstruosi hominum*) prevent access to what lies beyond.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Mittman and Kim, *Inconceivable Beasts: The Wonders of the East in the Beowulf Manuscript*, 173.

<sup>78</sup> According to AB, page 206, footnote 83, these peoples are Laplanders (Sami) or Finns.

<sup>79</sup> AB IV, xxxii.

<sup>80</sup> AB IV, xx. Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*, 6. 663.

<sup>81</sup> AB IV, xx. Getae are Goths and Dacians could refer to Danes but Capella writes Daci, which may also possibly refer to Romanians.

<sup>82</sup> Herodotus tells us the Scythians are calling a number of peoples to a conference; ‘the Tauri, Agathyrsi, Neuri, Androphagi, Melanchlaeni, Geloni, Budini, and Sauroatae.’ Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.103.

<sup>83</sup> AB IV, xxv.

<sup>84</sup> AB IV, xxv; *Adam Bremensis*, ‘*Ubi monstruosi hominum greges ultra prohibent accessum.*’ Alternative translation: ‘where monstrous men flock to prevent access.’ In the Swedish translation *Adam av Bremen*: ‘där



Although there is no certainty that Adam has read Pomponius Mela's work, his words seem to echo Pomponius Mela's depiction of this region, where griffins guard the treasure of gold on far side of these mountains.<sup>85</sup> Adam does not go into any detail in order to make these human monsters (or monstrous humans) seem frightening. As mentioned earlier the physically divergent monstrous or strange peoples were rarely described as overtly frightening.<sup>86</sup> The only ones to be shunned are the Anthropophagi, those bloodthirsty cannibals who are linked with Antichrist.

Does Adam actually believe in the existence of the monstrous peoples? Like Augustine and Isidore of Seville, Adam displays caution, specifically regarding the possible existence of the monstrous humans:

Many other things are usually mentioned, but in my effort to be brief I have not mentioned them, letting those speak about them who declare they themselves have seen them.<sup>87</sup>

As already demonstrated, Adam uses brevity, or being silent, when it suits him not to expand on a topic. Interestingly, he also uses brevity in relation to his summing up of Adalbert's life: 'If I have been silent on many points, it has been chiefly to hurry on to those which posterity, in general, find worth knowing about, or which the church in Hamburg may in particular keep in mind to its advantage.'<sup>88</sup> Thus Adam veers from points of less importance to concentrate on the important matters at hand; pastoral care, salvation of mankind, and, in the last chapter of his narrative, the depiction of the people whose conversion will bring this salvation closer.

Using brevity as an excuse Adam then omits further information on the monstrous peoples. It is possible that these omissions that bear witness to his scepticism of the existence of the monstrous peoples, however, he treated strange peoples and 'normal' inhabitants of the nations as equal, and he regarded one of the strange peoples with obvious disgust (the flesh eaters), which seems to point to belief. This

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flockar av vidunderliga mäniskor hindrar ett ytterligare framträngande,' 'vidunderlig' has a wider meaning of prodigy, monstrous, strange, or magnificent.

<sup>85</sup> Pomponius Mela, *De chorographia*, 2.1. This was discussed in Chapter 2. Versions of this legend can be traced back to Herodotus' *Histories*, 4.13,

<sup>86</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 162.

<sup>87</sup> AB IV, xxv.

<sup>88</sup> AB III, Lxxi.

ambiguity is the way Adam deals with the problematic issues throughout the narrative. He puts forward one view, then expresses the opposite in order to be on both sides of an argument. This cautious approach can be seen when he urges those who have seen the monstrous humans—he is referring to eyewitnesses—to come forward. This is also evident when Adam is referring to the monstrous beings in Russia (*Ruzzia*): ‘In that territory live very many other kinds of monsters (*ibi sunt alia monstra plurima*) whom mariners say they have often seen, although our people think it hardly credible.’<sup>89</sup> As Adam speaks of territory and not the sea, we can presume he is not talking of sea-monsters.

That Adam, like Gerald, believes the Ocean to be full of sea-monsters is not in doubt. Writing of Norway, Adam tells us that the Norwegians have the ability to draw great sea-monsters to the shore with their incantations.<sup>90</sup> Gerald mentions a ‘whale or some other monstrous sea animal,’ in the northern Ocean.<sup>91</sup> In ancient narratives the Ocean is a dangerous place full of savage sea monsters. This *topos* is illustrated on medieval and renaissance maps.<sup>92</sup> One example van Duzer explores is the Beatus Map from Gerona, dated to 975, where Oceanic creatures are depicted more as monsters than fish.<sup>93</sup> One map that particularly focusses on the northern Ocean is Olaus Magnus’ sixteenth century map of Scandinavia which shows the Atlantic and the Baltic as filled with these sea monsters, thus echoing classical and medieval ideas.<sup>94</sup>

Adam writes in more detail of the Amazons and the Cynocephali, linking the two peoples. Amazons are female warriors living without male companions. They have a special status among what Friedman calls ‘noble monsters,’ they are strong and brave, morally upright and always treated with respect.<sup>95</sup> In ancient narrative they are often linked with Greek heroes.<sup>96</sup> Adam discusses how they assure the continuation of their people. He tells us that ‘some declare’ (his words imply that this is not his view) that

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<sup>89</sup> AB IV, xix.

<sup>90</sup> AB IV, xxxii.

<sup>91</sup> *Top.* 45.

<sup>92</sup> For sea monsters, see Chet van Duzer, *Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps* (London, 2013); Chet van Duzer, ‘The Geography and Cartography of Monsters,’ in Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous* (Farnham, 2012) 387-443:417-420.

<sup>93</sup> van Duzer, ‘Geography and Cartography of Monsters,’ 387-443:418; van Duzer, *Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps*, 14f.

<sup>94</sup> Elena Balzamo, *Carta Marina, 1539, Olaus Magnus* (Paris, 2005).

<sup>95</sup> Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 170.

<sup>96</sup> See for instance Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos*, 1.15.

they conceive by ‘sipping water’ or that they are ‘made pregnant by merchants who pass that way’ or men they ‘hold captive’ or ‘by various monsters, which are not rare there (*ab aliis monstris, quae ibi non rara habentur*).’<sup>97</sup> Adam favours the latter; his discussion seem to point to belief in the existence of the Amazons. Whatever the identity of the fathers, the offspring, according to Adam, ‘if female become the most beautiful women,’ if male they become Cynocephali.<sup>98</sup> Adam’s explanation is unusual; according to White there is no precedent for making the Cynocephali a relation of the Amazons.<sup>99</sup> Ancient and medieval sources often mention regular partnerships between Amazons and other peoples.<sup>100</sup> Jordanes proclaims ‘the Scythians to have been the husbands of Amazons.’<sup>101</sup> It is uncertain if Adam has read Jordanes, but he is familiar with Orosius, who claims the Amazons lay with foreigners and killed off their male offspring.<sup>102</sup>

Cynocephali is a Greek word that means dog-head. Adam is obviously not familiar with Greek as he tells us that ‘the Cynocephali are men who have their heads on their breasts. They are often seen in Russia as captives and they voice their words in barks (*Cynocephali sunt, qui in pectore caput habent; in Ruzzia videntur sepe captivi, et cum verbis latrant in voce*).’<sup>103</sup> The people Adam describes may be a variation of Blemmyae but they are also part Cynocephali, as they bark. The Blemmyae is a people usually not associated with the north.<sup>104</sup> Both Isidore of Seville and Martianus Capella place them in Africa.<sup>105</sup> Making the Cynocephali captives in Russia appears to be Adam’s own idea, as is linking the Amazons with the Cynocephali.<sup>106</sup> Why can only be a matter of conjecture but these two peoples are both well-known and high-status. Friedman calls them the ‘most grotesque and unreasonable’ but also the most familiar

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<sup>97</sup> AB IV, xix.

<sup>98</sup> AB IV, xix.

<sup>99</sup> David Gordon White, *Myths of the Dog-Man* (Chicago, 1991) 60-61.

<sup>100</sup> Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.113-117 (33-35).

<sup>101</sup> Jordanes, *Getica*, V, tells us the Scythians were the husbands of the Amazons. See Christensen, *Cassiodorus Jordanes, and the History of the Goths*, 240. Pliny’s Amazons are the wives of the Saouromantae, Pliny, *NH*. VI, 7.

<sup>102</sup> Orosius, *Hist. adv. Paganos*, 1.15, links the Amazons with Greek heroes.

<sup>103</sup> *Adam bremensis*, IV, xix.

<sup>104</sup> Wood, ‘The Ends of the Earth’: The Bible, Bibles and the Other in Early Medieval Europe,’ 200-216:207-208. Blemmyae, see for example, Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques in Medieval Manuscripts*, 8; Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, various pages.

<sup>105</sup> Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis*, 6. 674. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XI.iii.17.

<sup>106</sup> White, *Myths of the Dog-Man*, 61.

of the monstrous peoples; as such they ‘stand out as a target for conversion in medieval missionary activity.’<sup>107</sup>

The barking Cynocephali in Adam’s description recall just such missionary activity related to Adam’s Hamburg-Bremen. The Cynocephali were the main subject of a ninth-century letter from Ratramnus to Rimbart.<sup>108</sup> Ratramnus was a well-known author and monk in the prominent monastery of Corbie, and Rimbart, as discussed in the first chapter, was one of the Hamburg-Bremen bishops that Adam idealised. The letter is of supreme importance as it summarises earlier ideas that define humanity. Additionally, as it is written in response to a Hamburg-Bremen bishop, it is of particular interest for the context of this thesis. We can recall that to Rimbart the conversion of peoples in the north was of key importance. When unsure of how to react if he met with the Cynocephali in his missionary work he evidently wrote to Ratramnus for advice: should he regard them as humans or animals? As a missionary bishop, he needed to know if they were human and therefore, by Christ’s command, must be converted.

Adam does not mention the letters between Rimbart and Ratramnus. It could be that he knows nothing of their communication or he suppresses his knowledge because he is aware that Ratramnus’ controversial views on transubstantiation had been criticised at a synod in 1059, less than two decades before Adam wrote his narrative.<sup>109</sup> During Ratramnus’ lifetime his standing as an authority must have been great if Rimbart, a well-travelled archbishop and author in his own right, saw fit to ask for his guidance. Also, the question of the strange peoples’ human status must have been of the highest degree of importance for Rimbart to have asked Ratramnus for help to resolve the matter. Unfortunately we no longer have the letter that Rimbart wrote but we have Ratramnus’ reply, which deals with this very pragmatic issue.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 61.

<sup>108</sup> Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 149-152:149. For a negative view of the Cynocephali as a foul people worshipped demons, see Aethicus Ister; *Die Kosmographie des Aethicus*, Otto Prinz (ed.) 114-115. Cited by Ian Wood in *The Missionary Life: Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe, 400-1050* (Harlow, 2001) 252.

<sup>109</sup> Ratramnus was known for his views on transubstantiation; Ratramnus, *De corpore et sanguine Domini, text original et notice bibliographique*, J.N. Bakhuizen van den Brink (ed.) (Amsterdam, 1974). In the eleventh century his views were an inspiration for Bishop Berengar which led to a controversy with Bishop Lanfranc. Berengar was condemned at a synod in 1059. H.E.J. Cowdrey, *Popes and Church Reform in the 11th Century* (Aldershot, 2000) 66f; Vaughn, *Anselm of Bec*, 40f.

<sup>110</sup> Steel, ‘Centaurs, Satyrs, and Cynocephali,’ 257-274:268.

Rimbert, it appears, had sent Ratramnus a detailed depiction of the lifestyle of the Cynocephali; their appearance, their cultural habits and way of life, as deduced from these lines which Ratramnus include in his reply, and which he then proceeds to discuss.<sup>111</sup>

they form a society and live in villages; they cultivate fields and harvest crops: they cover their private parts through human modesty rather than exposing them like beasts: and for garments they use not merely skins but true clothes by which they indicate their modesty.<sup>112</sup>

From this depiction Ratramnus notes several details that point to these peoples being rational: they live in communities, which implies that they have a common law, all of which requires discipline and morals; they practise agriculture—reap a harvest—which signifies knowledge of this art. As distinct from animals they modestly cover their sexual parts which suggests that they are able to distinguish between what is shameful and not. They do not wear just skins but make clothes of wool and linen. All of this, according to Ratramnus, requires a rational mind.<sup>113</sup> As discussed in the last chapter, cities and agriculture were seen as markers of civilisation in contrast to the more primitive pastoral lifestyle of the barbarians, who were mobile, followed their herds and wore skins, if not altogether nude. The Cynocephali in this depiction are not only human, they have a degree of sophistication that points to a civilisation, in spite of being unconverted (in fact we are not told of their religious beliefs, if any) and inhabiting a remote location: in this they resemble Adam's idealised Swedes and Norwegians. Ratramnus cites Isidore of Seville, that humans—and in this he includes Cynocephali, Cyclopes and others—come in all shapes; he also mentions in evidence that St Christopher had been born a Cynocephalus.<sup>114</sup> In early Latin accounts of his

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<sup>111</sup> Discussions on Ratramnus' letter in Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 188f; Wood, *The Missionary Life: Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe, 400-1050*, 134, 252; Wood, 'The Ends of the Earth': The Bible, Bibles and the Other in Early Medieval Europe,' 200-216:208; Mark Vessey, 'Promised Lands, Premised Texts (Commentary on Part Two),' in Mark Vessey (ed.), *The Calling of the Nations: Exegesis, Ethnography, and Empire in a Biblical-Historical Present* (Toronto, 2010) 217-250:237; Steel, 'Centaurs, Satyrs, and Cynocephali,' 257-274:268; Robert Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2006) 97-100; Ian Wood, 'Categorising the Cynocephali,' in Richard Corradini, Matthew Gillis, Rosamond McKitterick and Irene van Renswoude (eds.), *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages* (Vienna, 2010) 125-136:131-136; Scott Bruce, 'Hagiography as Monstrous Ethnography: A Note on Ratramnus of Corbie's Letter Concerning the Conversion of the Cynocephali,' in Michael W. Herren, Gernot R. Wieland, Carin Ruff and Ross Gilbert Arthur (eds.), *Insignis sophiae arcator: Essays in Honour of Michael W. Herren on his 65th Birthday* (Turnhout, 2006) 45-56.

<sup>112</sup> Friedman (tr.) in *The Monstrous Races*, 188; Ratramnus, *Epistolae de cynocephalis*, Migne, PL 121, 1153-56.

<sup>113</sup> Wood, 'Categorising the Cynocephali,' 125-136:131.

<sup>114</sup> Ratramnus, *Epistolae de cynocephalis*; Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XI.iii.9. A discussion on the human status of monsters, Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 178-196.

martyrdom, St Christopher is described as a Cynocephalus and in Byzantine tradition he is at times portrayed as such.<sup>115</sup> A depiction of a cynocephalic St Christopher is also found in a German twelfth century martyrology.<sup>116</sup> *The Wonders of the East* shows a 'half-dog' (also in possession of rather discreet tusks and mane), as a citizen of foreign lands: fat and clearly wealthy as he is sumptuously dressed in several layers of draped garments in various colours.<sup>117</sup> Ratramnus' final proof of the human status of the Cynocephali is that they have all sorts of domesticated animals, the same animals that are in Germany. For the Cynocephali to tend livestock would not be possible if they themselves were animals. We know from Genesis, Ratramnus continues, that man was given authority to rule over animals, especially the domesticated ones (Genesis 1:28).

The word rational (*rationalis*) is repeated throughout the text.<sup>118</sup> According to Rimbert's sources the Cynocephali must be animals as they kept their heads to the ground, whereas humans look to the sky, coupled with the fact the Cynocephali had no speech but barked.<sup>119</sup> These sources apparently followed Augustine who declared that the Cynocephalus' 'dog-like head and barking proclaim them beasts rather than men,' although we must recall that Augustine throws doubt on their existence in the very next sentence.<sup>120</sup> In the *Lives* of the St Christopher we find that as a Cynocephalus St Christopher earnestly prayed to God to give him human speech, a wish that was granted.<sup>121</sup> From this we can infer that God can give human speech to the monstrous peoples. The barking speech was also a mark of a barbarian, for instance Isidore of Seville spoke of the Irish language as a 'barking tongue' (*latratibus linguis Scotti*).<sup>122</sup>

<sup>115</sup> Christopher Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (London, 2003) 215; Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 72; Williams, *Deformed Discourse*, 286-297. Saint Mercurius was also at times depicted as a Cynocephalus. On Mercurius (and Christopher), see Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, 71-72; Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies*, 15. See also Joyce Lionarons, 'From Monster to Martyr: The Old English Legend of St Christopher,' in Timothy S. Jones and David A. Sprunger (eds.), *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Imaginations* (Kalamazoo, 2002) 171-186.

<sup>116</sup> Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart, Fol. 415. 50r. See White, *Myths of the Dog-Man*, 35-36, Plate 2, page 88; Kirk Ambrose, *The Marvellous and the Monstrous in the Sculpture of Twelfth Century Europe* (Woodbridge, 2013) 3.

<sup>117</sup> BL MS Cotton Vitellius A XV, f. 100r. Mittman and Kim, *Inconceivable Beasts: The Wonders of the East in the Beowulf Manuscript*, 60.

<sup>118</sup> Ratramnus, *Epistolae de cynocephalis*, Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 149-152.

<sup>119</sup> Ratramnus, *Epistolae de cynocephalis*, Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 149-152:149.

<sup>120</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 16.8.

<sup>121</sup> 'Passio Sancti Christophori Martyris,' *Analecta Bollandiana* 1 (1882), 394-405 [BHL 1764], David Woods (tr.), *Military Martyrs*; <http://www.ucc.ie/archive/milmar/BHL1764.html> (cited 2.7.2015); *The Irish Passion of St Christopher*, J. Fraser (tr.), 'The Passion of St. Christopher,' *Revue Celtique* 34 (1913) 307-325, also at <http://www.ucc.ie/archive/milmar/chrsirish.html> (cited 1.7.2015) 2.

<sup>122</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XIX.xxiii. 6.

Isidore of Seville also states that the barking of the Cynocephali reveals them to be beasts rather than humans, a citation from Augustine.<sup>123</sup> Ratramnus evidently disagrees. He does not comment on their lack of speech, for him their civilised rational behaviour was enough to define them as humans.

The idea of conversion and salvation reaching the monstrous peoples at the limit of the world is further demonstrated by the images carved on the tympanum of the Abbey Church of St Mary-Magdalene in Vézelay.<sup>124</sup> Located at the crossroad of two major pilgrimage routes in Burgundy, Vézelay was an important site in relation to crusades.<sup>125</sup> The tympanum, constructed 1120-1132, is later than Adam's work but it contextualises Adam's ideas since it represents the monstrous as prospective Christians, following patristic models. On the archivolt are Pigmies from Africa, Panotii, a large-eared people mentioned by Pliny, and the Sciritae and Cynocephali.<sup>126</sup> Unusually, the monstrous peoples here represented are not nude, but decently covered in simple or primitive garments, indicating a degree of civilisation.<sup>127</sup> Katzenellenbogen argued that the tympanum depicts the missions of the apostles to take the message of Christ to the limit of the world. Low, on the other hand, states that it is a synthesis of Pentecost and a representation of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians 2:22-23.<sup>128</sup> Taylor argues that it is a Pentecost scene.<sup>129</sup> All interpretations reflect the importance of conversion of polytheists at all corners of the world, with its implication of salvation to the faithful: the strange peoples are human beings and it is the task of the apostles to bring them salvation, ideas that are also of vital importance to Adam.<sup>130</sup>

Adam's inclusion of the strange or monstrous peoples from an ancient narrative tradition—in a work of that is mainly church history—has a purpose; they remind the reader of the peripheral location of Sweden and Norway, and the role the conversion of these nations have in the larger context of Christian salvation. He writes of northern

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<sup>123</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XI.iii.15; Augustine, *City of God*, 14.8.

<sup>124</sup> Adolf Katzenellenbogen, 'The Central Tympanum at Vézelay: Its Encyclopedic Meaning and its Relation to the First Crusade,' *The Art Bulletin* 26, no. 3 (Sept. 1944) 141-151.

<sup>125</sup> Vézelay was one of the three places Pope Urban considered for the preaching of the first crusade, instead he settled on Clermont. Katzenellenbogen, 'The Central Tympanum at Vézelay,' 141-151:148.

<sup>126</sup> Pliny mentions people with large ears but without calling them Panotii. Pliny, *NH*. 7.2.

<sup>127</sup> On the nudity of the monstrous peoples see: Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, 31; Debra Higgs Strickland, 'Monstrosity and Race in the Late Middle Ages,' in Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous* (Farnham, 2012) 365-386:372.

<sup>128</sup> Peter Low, '“You Who Once Where Far Off:” Enlivening Scripture in the Main Portal at Vézelay,' *The Art Bulletin* 85, no. 3 (2003) 469-489:469.

<sup>129</sup> Michael D. Taylor, 'The Pentecost at Vézelay,' *Gesta* 19, no. 1 (1980) 9-15.

<sup>130</sup> Cynocephali as beneficiaries of God's word in Vézelay, see Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*, 51.

populations without distinguishing between mythical or monstrous peoples, and what we know as the ‘normal’ inhabitants. For Adam, following Augustine, they are all humans in need of Christian faith. Earlier sources, like Ratramnus, reinforce the idea of the humanity the monstrous or strange peoples, in his case of the Cynocephali. Its human status is also demonstrated in a later century, when it is included in the decorative program of the Tympanum at Vézelay.

### **Adam, the Amazons and Divine Vengeance**

In his treatment of the Amazons, Adam demonstrates that he gives the monstrous and strange peoples the same status as the ‘normal’ population in Sweden: they are seen as part of humankind. On one occasion the Amazons are seen to be doing God’s work and thus can be regarded as particularly close to him. When a group of Swedes are pursued by divine vengeance (*interea Sueones, qui episcopum suum repulerunt, divina ultio secuta est*), it falls on the Amazons to carry it out. The Swedish king Edmund the Bad was judged to have sinned against God. His crime, in the eyes of Adam, was to expel a bishop sent by Hamburg-Bremen, in favour of one already in place, Osmund.<sup>131</sup> Adam calls Osmund *acephalum* (headless), signifying that Osmund had not been sent directly from Hamburg-Bremen, but was a usurper.<sup>132</sup> For us ‘headless’ recalls the monstrous Blemmyae; whether Adam made the same link is uncertain. The term was, in his time, usually used to denote institutions or persons in ecclesiastical disputes: it indicated a lack of leadership.<sup>133</sup> Osmund, in spite of inducing the king to drive away the Hamburg-Bremen bishop, did not suffer any consequences.<sup>134</sup> Instead, king Edmund’s son and his followers were punished by God for the disobedience of the Swedes.

The Swedes, who had expelled their bishop, were in meantime pursued by divine vengeance. First, indeed, when one of the king’s sons, named Anund, was sent by his father to extend his dominions, he came into the land of the women, who we think were

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<sup>131</sup> AB III, xv.

<sup>132</sup> Janson, *Templum Nobilissimum*, 111.

<sup>133</sup> Janson, *Templum Nobilissimum*, 111.

<sup>134</sup> AB III, xv. When Osmund retired he went to Ely where he died c. 1070. AB III, xv, footnote 53. On Osmund’s life see also Per Beskow, ‘Byzantine Influences in the Conversion of the Baltic Region?’ in Martin Carver (ed.), *The Cross goes North: Process of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300-1300* (York, 2003) 559-563:562.



Amazons (*quas nos arbitramur amazonas esse*), and he as well as his army perished there of poison which the women mingled in the springs.<sup>135</sup>

We know nothing of Anund except that he was sent to expand the territories of the Swedes on behalf of his father. Note that Adam does not doubt that there is a land where women rule, but employs caution when he adds that ‘he thinks’ they were Amazons, which reinforces his doubt of the existence of monstrous people. Dying after drinking water from poisoned springs is a miserable ending devoid of heroism for a king’s son and his companions.<sup>136</sup> Here God’s punishment falls selectively on a few Swedes. Earlier in Adam’s narrative we saw that he regarded the Norman invasion of England as God’s punishment for an errant people.<sup>137</sup> In another instance a Danish king is pursued by divine vengeance for his persecution of Christians.<sup>138</sup> In Adam’s own region the attack and subsequent decline of Hamburg ‘to a wilderness’ is attributed to the sins of its population.<sup>139</sup>

### The Monstrous in Norway

Adam does not specifically mention strange and monstrous peoples in relation to Norway, but he does use the words magicians and monsters (*magi, monstres*) when referring to polytheist practises in Norway, making it necessary to briefly discuss the implications:

Although all barbarism (*tota barbaries*) overflows with their numbers [magicians] the Norwegian land in particular was full of these monsters (*monstres talibus plena est*). For soothsayers and augers and sorcerers and enchanterers (*divine et augers et magi et incantatores*) and other satellites of Antichrist live where by their deceptions and wonders they may hold unhappy souls up for mockery by the demons.<sup>140</sup>

To find polytheist rites in this location is to be expected, as Norway is located at the very limit of the world where such things are to be expected, yet within the context of the chapter, the accusations of barbarism are, if not reversed, at least mitigated. The

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<sup>135</sup> AB III, xvi.

<sup>136</sup> The same story is repeated in schol. 123, where the information is said to come from Adalward.

<sup>137</sup> AB III, Lii.

<sup>138</sup> AB II, xxix.

<sup>139</sup> AB II, xvii.

<sup>140</sup> AB II, Lvii.

chapter describes King Olav's return to Norway. Adam represents him as a virtuous king whose zeal decreased 'pagan' activities in order that Christianity 'might take firmer root in his nation.'<sup>141</sup> When Adam speaks of monsters in Norway, he means those who behave like monsters, like soothsayers and sorcerers. Adam equates these with Antichrist, as described in 1 John 2:22, 1 John 4:2-3, where Antichrist denotes polytheists; Christians believed they were against Christ. Thus the Norwegians here are people who have not yet heard the message of Christ. Fraesdorff connects Antichrist in Adam's citations above with Gog and Magog in Ezekiel's prophesy.<sup>142</sup> Antichrist is often linked with Gog and Magog and the end of the world, when Gog and Magog are due to escape from their enclosure in the far north, in order to join an army of Antichrist to strike against the Christians.<sup>143</sup> This present thesis does not follow his view: as discussed in the previous chapter, this thesis suggested that Adam interpreted Ezekiel's prophesy on Magog as relating to Gog and Magog, which he linked—in a positive manner—to the Goths and to their conversion.

Polytheists are described in demonic terms in Adam's work, for example when he describes their rites in Germany before the event of Christianity in great detail so that the readers should know 'from what darkness of error they were freed through the grace and mercy of God.'<sup>144</sup> In his own era, these 'pagan' demons are still at work in Estonia, and in Rethra, in the Slav country—only four days journey from Hamburg—in Uppsala, and as in the citation above, in Norway.<sup>145</sup> Adam also connected monstrous pagan behaviour with Adalbert, the archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen, as we saw in the first chapter of this thesis. Adalbert's companion Notebald was described as a magician, and Adam also briefly associated Adalbert with magic arts.<sup>146</sup> These are all examples of monstrous behaviour. Therefore the monsters in the above section do not refer to the strange or monstrous peoples but to pagan behaviour, rites which were then successfully banished by Olav, who later became Saint. Scior interprets Adam's references to pagan practises in Norway as evidence of Adam's view of Norwegians as pagans and barbarians.<sup>147</sup> My thesis argues that Adam's barbaric and 'pagan'

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<sup>141</sup> AB II, Lvii.

<sup>142</sup> Fraesdorff, *Der barbarische Norden*, 310-311.

<sup>143</sup> Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm*, 183-184.

<sup>144</sup> AB I, viii.

<sup>145</sup> Estonia, AB IV, xvii; Rethra, II, xxi; Uppsala, IV, xxvii.

<sup>146</sup> Schol. 88; AB III, Lxiii.

<sup>147</sup> Scior, *Das Eigene und das Fremde*, 126.

Norwegians are, in Adam's eyes, a past situation which he makes clear is steadily improving. Immediately after the quote he relates the success of Christian conversion in Norway.

### **Gerald and the Monstrous and Strange Beings in Ireland as Signs or Portents: 'A Wolf that Talked With a Priest'**

In the second part of the *Topography*, Gerald states he will write of those things that 'appearing to be contrary to the course of nature, are worthy of wonder.'<sup>148</sup> Among these Gerald places stories about a talking wolf, ox-men, and other accounts of 'things that are marvellous in themselves.'<sup>149</sup> This chapter argues that following Augustine's and Isidore of Seville's ideas of monstrous births as signs or portents, Gerald's monstrous individuals are symbols of the sinful nature of the Irish, even those sympathetically described carry messages that reinforce the necessity of church reform and thus implicitly Gerald's colonial agenda.

The chapter about what Gerald calls the 'talking wolf' is the first of several which puts emphasis on the sinful nature of the Irish by linking them with beastly appearance (for example, the ox-men) or beastly behaviour (a woman who loved a goat). Gerald relates a story of story of priest's encounter with what appears to be two wolves but in actuality are two people who had been compelled to go into exile, 'not just from their territory but also from their bodily shape' for the duration of seven years, due to a curse by a saint.<sup>150</sup> The encounter takes place in a forest on a journey from Ulster to Meath. The location is important; at this time, according to Karkov, it had an Irish overlord and could thus be seen as an Irish wilderness between two areas of civilisation under English rule.<sup>151</sup> Gerald does not point this out, but his educated contemporary reader may well be aware of this. One of these humans in wolf-shape seeks the priest to attend the last moments of his dying female companion, also with the 'appearance of a beast.'<sup>152</sup> When the priest was hesitant to perform the last rites,

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<sup>148</sup> *Top.* 33.

<sup>149</sup> *Top.* 33. This thesis will not concern itself with miracles, another subject matter in the second part of the narrative.

<sup>150</sup> *Top.* 52.

<sup>151</sup> Karkov, 'Tale of the Ancients: Colonial Werewolves and the Mapping of Postcolonial Ireland,' 93-109:97.

<sup>152</sup> *Top.* 52.

the male wolf offered proof of the female wolf's human status: 'to remove all doubt he pulled all the skin of the she-wolf from the head down to the navel, folding it back with his paw, as if it was a hand.'<sup>153</sup> Although terrified the priest performed the rites, upon which the wolf once again folded the skin back over her body.

As Salisbury points out, in later recensions of the *Topography* this story caused Gerald to reflect on what was a human and what was an animal.<sup>154</sup> The section briefly examines Gerald's definition of humanity as spelled out by Gerald. It also explores how he uses the story to reinforce his political and reformist agenda by casting these divergent beings in the role of warnings against sin, as well as other aspects of the story, less easy to define: its incongruity. It should be noted that although this story often has been discussed in the light of werewolf traditions, it is not, as Bynum points out, a case of metamorphosis, a change from man to wolf, but of a human soul trapped in an alien body; a man plus wolf.<sup>155</sup> From Gerald's text it is clear that although he speaks of the humans as having changed into wolves for a specific duration, it is evidently a case of a wolf on the outside with a human being underneath the wolf-skin.<sup>156</sup>

The story is intriguing in that the wolf, although beastly in shape, comes across as a rational, well-mannered and polite human being, whilst the priest is fearful and hesitant to the point of appearing absurd almost throughout the story. Murphy points out that the priest 'in what seems like a parody of true religion' extends the holy office to the beast.<sup>157</sup> Indeed, for the modern reader the story may at first appear to turn to farce when the priest tells the wolf he cannot offer communion as he does not have the viaticum; the wolf points out it is hanging around his neck. However, it is not Gerald's intention to amuse. Gerald is critical of the priest who gave communion to the wolf 'more through terror than reason,' as it was only after he had done so that the priest was convinced of the human nature of the wolf.<sup>158</sup> Through rational conversation the priest then arrived at the certainty that the wolf was indeed a man. The wolf evidently gave considered and religious answers to all questions put to him. Here Gerald follows

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<sup>153</sup> *Top.* 52. See also Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages*, 91f

<sup>154</sup> Salisbury, *The Beast Within, Animals in the Middle Ages*, 144. See also Caroline Walker Bynum, 'Metamorphosis, or Gerald and the Werewolf,' *Speculum* 73 (1998) 987-1013:1011.

<sup>155</sup> Bynum, *Metamorphosis*, 29; Bynum, 'Metamorphosis, or Gerald and the Werewolf,' 987-1013:1012.

<sup>156</sup> Bynum, 'Metamorphosis, or Gerald and the Werewolf,' 987-1013:1001, speaks of 'fake' werewolves. Salisbury, *The Beast Within, Animals in the Middle Ages*, 145, of sympathetic werewolves.

<sup>157</sup> Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 51.

<sup>158</sup> *Top.* 52.

the ideas of Augustine and Isidore of Seville, of rationality as a marker of a man. In later recensions of the *Topography* Gerald asks ‘if any man should kill this animal, would he be called a homicide?’ and replies by citing Augustine; that any rational and mortal being whatever its form, must be considered human.<sup>159</sup> The shape does not matter as God, Gerald explains, can change the nature of a being, either to ‘vindicate his judgement or to exhibit divine power.’<sup>160</sup> So far Gerald follows the same ideas of what characterises a human as Augustine and Isidore of Seville.

Although the story can be seen as an allegory used to highlight colonial and reform agendas, Gerald apparently did not think that it stretched his credibility to claim that this was a real event. He tells us it became a matter of discussion for a synod two years later. He was invited to attend but could not go, but advised the synod that a report be sent to the pope. Bringing the matter to papal scrutiny bears witness to Gerald taking this seriously. Not all his readers did. They protested against the stories in the second book of the *Topography*—in particular that of the ‘talking wolf,’ the ox-man, the bearded woman and the goat and lion copulating with women, as Gerald relates in the introduction to *The Conquest of Ireland*.<sup>161</sup> Gerald regards this criticism as envy: ‘envy arrogantly assails the middle book,’ then vehemently defends the veracity of these stories, supporting his claims with similar examples from biblical and patristic authorities.<sup>162</sup> Although nature’s ‘routine activities’ can to some extent be understood, he argues that the effects of her power cannot be fully comprehended. Bynum suggests that the ‘length of the discussion and the number of authorities cited are indications of the anxiety caused by question of the wolves’ status.’<sup>163</sup> It does indeed seem so; later recensions of the *Topography* duplicate much of the defence from the introduction to *The Conquest of Ireland*. In his defence Gerald explicitly points to Book Eleven of Isidore of Seville’s *Etymology*, which deals with portents.<sup>164</sup>

In later recensions Gerald explicitly uses the man/wolf to voice a prophecy in aid of his political and reformist agenda, to point out the sinfulness of the Irish. Through the voice of the male human/wolf confessing the guilt of the Irish, Gerald forwards his

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<sup>159</sup> *Giraldus Cambrensis, The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.). Augustine, *City of God*, 16.8. Gerald’s use of Augustine, see Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 94f.

<sup>160</sup> *Giraldus Cambrensis, The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) 2.19.

<sup>161</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, ‘Introduction to the Public Reading,’ 3-19:5.

<sup>162</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, ‘Introduction to the Public Reading,’ 3-19:5.

<sup>163</sup> Bynum, ‘Metamorphosis, or Gerald and the Werewolf,’ 987-1013:1011.

<sup>164</sup> Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, ‘Introduction to the Public Reading,’ 3-19:5.

own view: ‘for the sins of our nation and their enormous vices, the anger of the Lord, falling on an evil generation, hath given them into the hands of the enemies.’<sup>165</sup> Here the human/wolf states that the Irish themselves carried the blame for being invaded by the English: it was their own fault for being sinners. The human/wolf also carries a warning to the English: ‘As long as this foreign race [the English] shall keep the commandments of the Lord, and walk his ways it will be secure and invincible.’<sup>166</sup> The wolf/man states what is implicit in this warning against error: if ‘this people [the English] shall chance, from living among us [Irish], to adopt our depraved habits, doubtless they will provoke divine vengeance on themselves also.’<sup>167</sup> We saw earlier in this chapter, when discussing Adam’s narrative, how the Amazons were used to carry out God’s vengeance in order to punish the errant Swedes. In Gerald’s *Topography* the wolf conveys a similar ideas of a punishing God.

In the previous chapter of this thesis we saw how Gerald blamed the Irish church for the state of the faith in the country; the priests had kept within their enclosures and not shown leadership, nor had they been models for the population to emulate. They were thus were responsible for what Gerald saw as the deplorable moral and spiritual state of the Irish people. Ignoring the fact that reform had taken place and was on-going, he used this as justification for the conquest. The Irish, as Karkov points out, have to appear like beasts, like the wolves in the story, but also redeemable, worthy of communion; to be made to seem at once repulsive and attractive, ‘a duality that characterises colonial and post-colonial discourse across the centuries.’<sup>168</sup> In this case Gerald’s she-wolf is brought into the Christian fold, to Karkov this symbolises the taming of the wild parts of Ireland.<sup>169</sup> She also argues that the dying female woman/wolf could be understood as the passing from the old order to the new sovereignty.<sup>170</sup> Knight similarly interprets the story in a colonial light. She remarks that the priest’s ‘reticence to administer the Eucharist to the female werewolf demonstrates that only particular kinds of bodies are acceptable to receive this sacrament.’<sup>171</sup> The male wolf had to prove she was human by removing the extra layer

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<sup>165</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) 2.19.

<sup>166</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) 2.19.

<sup>167</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) 2.19.

<sup>168</sup> Karkov, ‘Tale of the Ancients: Colonial Werewolves and the Mapping of Postcolonial Ireland,’ 93-109:98.

<sup>169</sup> Karkov, ‘Tale of the Ancients: Colonial Werewolves and the Mapping of Postcolonial Ireland,’ 93-109:98.

<sup>170</sup> Karkov, ‘Tale of the Ancients: Colonial Werewolves and the Mapping of Postcolonial Ireland,’ 93-109:99.

<sup>171</sup> Knight, ‘Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles,’ 55-86:75.

of fur, as if the skin buried her humanity. For Knight, the peeling away the skin was symbolic of removing the barbarism of the Irish.<sup>172</sup> Although the Irish here are presented as beasts, they are human under the veneer; they can be redeemed, and through the conquest can be brought into the fold of the reformed church.<sup>173</sup> From their respective perspectives Karkov and Knight are correct in their analysis. However, the story remains an unsolved puzzle, a paradox. It is the male wolf/human, rather than the priest, that is the protagonist of the story. It is with him and his dying wife that the readers' sympathy lies.<sup>174</sup>

Murphy has commented on the ambiguity of the wolf story; on the surface the wolves/humans are beasts of the forest, but the opposite is also true; the wild forest location was not their original home. They are victims of a curse, and they are thoroughly religious, and under the skin, clearly human. They are in some ways the opposite of the barbarism Gerald claims of the Irish.<sup>175</sup> For Murphy the story expresses 'the startling coalescence of the sameness and difference that Ireland always presents to the writer from Britain.'<sup>176</sup> Murphy rightly emphasised the ambiguity of the story. Although Gerald clearly aims at representing the wolves as symbolising Irish sins and warnings to the English lest they too sin, his intention partly fails. Disregarding the strange appearance of the wolf, Gerald describes the wolf as a misfortunate elderly man, caring for his dying wife, dignified, polite and well-spoken, helpfully showing the less heroic protagonist—the priest—the way out of the forest in the following morning. This compassion and respect towards the wolf/man leaves the reader perplexed. However, whilst the 'wolf' couple are sympathetically described and cannot help their predicament—and to the modern reader it may seem as if Gerald's intention has backfired, in that they are so very well mannered—Gerald is still in this instance describing Irish individuals as beasts.

Gerald's compassion for strange beings, or hybrids of various kinds, can also be seen in his treatment in of the ox-men (discussed later in this chapter), and in his other works, for example in *The Journey through Wales*, where he is clearly angry with a

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<sup>172</sup> Knight, 'Werewolves, Monsters, and Miracles,' 55–86:75. Wolf story, 41–53.

<sup>173</sup> Sylvia Huot, *Postcolonial fictions in the Roman de Perceforest: Cultural Identities and Hybridities* (Woodbridge, 2007) 52.

<sup>174</sup> A recent contribution to this debate: Lindsay Zachary Panxhi, 'Rewriting the Werewolf and Rehabilitating the Irish in the Topographia Hibernica of Gerald of Wales,' *Viator* 46, 3 (2015) 21–40.

<sup>175</sup> Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 52.

<sup>176</sup> Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 53.

country dweller (*rusticus*) who killed a litter of malformed puppies, said to be part-dog and part-monkey.<sup>177</sup> The killer was revolted by their hybrid bodies.<sup>178</sup> Such feelings of disgust towards the malformed puppies are not evident in Gerald. Mittman has argued that Gerald's compassion for the malformed hybrids is related to his own part-Welsh part-Norman background.<sup>179</sup> We can recall, from the first chapter of this thesis, how Gerald (probably correctly) deemed his Welsh background a hindrance to his career. It may be that his fraught experience of not properly belonging anywhere might have led to compassion for these unfortunate monstrous hybrids. However, this should not obscure his intentions when describing the ox-men. Whilst he clearly felt compassion with strange hybrids, his intention in describing these ox-men is nevertheless to highlight the sinful behaviour of the Irish people and thus their need for church-reform, and in extension English rule, since, according to Gerald, only English rule can guarantee church reform.<sup>180</sup>

### Gerald and the Ox-Men

Gerald depicts two human-animal hybrids (ox-men), not on the periphery where one might expect monstrous peoples, but in the eastern regions which had been conquered by the English. Like the human/wolf they are signs of the sinfulness of the Irish. The heading of the chapter which describes two ox-men (*de semiboue uiro semiuiroque boue*) alludes to the myth from Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*.<sup>181</sup> In Ovid's story a queen is made to fall in love with a beautiful white bull, and to have intercourse with the animal, as a punishment for her husband's transgressions against Poseidon.<sup>182</sup> Ovid presents the unfortunate queen as a despicable criminal who gave birth to a monstrous being: a creature half-man, half-ox.<sup>183</sup> The fact that he is using the very words of Ovid in the chapter heading emphasises the textual ancestry of Gerald's ox-man; it is a creature born out of sinful bestial intercourse, a fact that Gerald also plainly states in the

<sup>177</sup> Gerald of Wales, *The Journey through Wales*, 2.11.

<sup>178</sup> Gerald of Wales, *The Journey through Wales*, 2.11. See Mittman, 'The Other Close at Hand,' 97-112:103.

<sup>179</sup> Mittman, 'The Other Close at Hand,' 97-112:104.

<sup>180</sup> Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us*, 42-43. See also Michelle P. Brown, 'Marvels of the West: Giraldus Cambrensis and the Role of the Author in the Development of Marginal Illustration,' A.S.G. Edwards, *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, Vol. 10 (London, 2002) 34-59:55.

<sup>181</sup> *Topographia Hibernie*, 145. 'Semibovemque virum semivirumque bovem,' in Ovid's, *Ars Amatoria*, J. Lewis May (tr.) (1930) 2.24.

<sup>182</sup> The story is told in great detail in Apollodorus Library, I.2, in S.M. Trzaskoma, R.S. Smith, & S. Brunet, (eds.), *Anthology of Classical Myth: Primary Sources in Translation* (Indianapolis, 2004) 46.

<sup>183</sup> 'Daedalus ut clausit conceptum crimine matris.' Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, 2.23.



chapter. Unlike the monstrous peoples in Adam's account, Gerald's monstrous beings 'are the distorted evidence of deeply sinful behaviour, of bestial intercourse.'<sup>184</sup>

The first ox-man that Gerald depicts was in 'the neighbourhood of Wicklow when Gerald's cousin Maurice fitzGerald got possession of that country and the castle.'<sup>185</sup> Placing the creature in an exact location adds veracity to a story: in the eyes of his readers it would seem less likely to be pure fantasy. It also puts emphasis on Gerald's agenda as it is an area which had been conquered by the English where, according to later recensions of the *Topography*, people were 'especially addicted to such abominations' that produced these malformed creatures.<sup>186</sup> By implication: they had deserved to be conquered. Gerald describes the first ox-man in detail: a human body, hooves instead of feet and hands, huge round eyes, flat face, no nostrils, bald, and unable to speak. Although he could not speak, he appears rational in other ways: we are told he frequently came to the castle to eat dinner. Gerald states that he lived for a long time at the court of Maurice but was then killed by the local Irish youths out of envy and malice. We are told the reason for this; the 'youths of the castle' [i.e. the invading English] taunted the 'Irish natives' with 'begetting such beings on cows.'<sup>187</sup> Gerald clearly felt compassion for this being, and saw his death as undeserved.<sup>188</sup> The half man, half ox recalls the human monsters or monstrous humans in Adam's account. However, unlike Adam who did not seem to doubt the humanity of the strange or monstrous peoples, Gerald was in doubt of his ox-man's human status and wondered 'if indeed it be right to call him a man.'<sup>189</sup>

In later editions of his work, the basic outline of the stories remain the same but Gerald greatly expands on his discussions in relation to them. In the case of the ox-men he expounds on the issue of their status: 'Who can associate such a monster, an irrational animal with no speech and reason, with the family of rational beings? (*Animal monstruosum animal irrationale, omni penitus tam ratione quam oratione carens, rationalium gregi quis associabit.*)'<sup>190</sup> In this case Gerald avoids giving a direct reply:

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<sup>184</sup> Mittman, 'The Other Close at Hand,' 97-112:102.

<sup>185</sup> *Top.* 54. O' Meara's footnote 33, p. 133 tells us this was in 1174.

<sup>186</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) 2.19.

<sup>187</sup> *Top.* 54.

<sup>188</sup> On Gerald's sympathetic treatment of the hybrids, see Mittman, 'The Other Close at Hand,' 97-112:100-103.

<sup>189</sup> *Top.* 54.

<sup>190</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) 2.21.

‘nature’s eccentricities of this kind must be excused and her judgement rather be dreaded than made the subject of discussion and disputation.’<sup>191</sup> Like Adam, cutting himself short when speaking of the monstrous beings as related earlier in this chapter, Gerald also stops when the subject matter becomes too difficult.

Gerald leaves the human status of the ox-man unresolved. Mittman states that the ox-man does not fit neatly into any category: ‘his state is both, and neither, defying categorization and therefore—despite Gerald’s kindly treatment of the figure—rendering him monstrous.’<sup>192</sup> In a similar vein Faltera argues that Gerald’s lack of comments on this episode ‘confounds all attempts at intellectualization, categorization and definite understanding.’<sup>193</sup> Confounding the reader further, Gerald writes that a second ox-man, also located in Wicklow, spent a full year as a calf in the field with its mother before being ‘transferred to the society of men’ as it had more of man than beast.<sup>194</sup> In the case of the second ox-man, Gerald decided that he was human.

The visual images of the ox-man may also give us a clue as to his status. He is illustrated in four of the medieval manuscripts of the *Topography* with a marginal drawing representing a deformed human.<sup>195</sup> The illustrations to the *Topography* are not integrated into the text, but accompany the text in the margins, a programme of illustration that was probably initiated by Gerald.<sup>196</sup> The ox-man is depicted nude, indicating his bestial nature, standing upright, mostly human in shape but with cloven hooves instead of hands and feet, approached by a fully-dressed beardless man. Whilst the ox-man is standing still, almost fully facing the viewer, looking wholly benign, the approaching man—English from his beardless appearance—is seen in profile, walking or running towards the ox-man, seemingly eager to extend hospitality to him. He is depicted in this manner in three of the four illustrated manuscripts; in the remaining manuscript the approaching man has been left out of the picture, with the consequence that the ox-man’s stretched-out hand appears to be making a gesture.<sup>197</sup> However, the

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<sup>191</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) 2.21.

<sup>192</sup> Mittman, ‘The Other Close at Hand,’ 97-112:103.

<sup>193</sup> Faltera, *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination*, 141.

<sup>194</sup> *Top.* 54.

<sup>195</sup> The four illustrated manuscripts of the *Topography* are: Cambridge University Library MS. Ff I.27; Royal MS 13 B. viii; Oxford Bodleian Library MS, Laud Misc. 720; Dublin National Library or Ireland MS 700.

<sup>196</sup> Brown, ‘Marvels of the West: Giraldus Cambrensis and the Role of the Author in the Development of Marginal Illustration,’ 34-59:36, 48.

<sup>197</sup> He is alone in the Dublin National Library or Ireland MS 700. This illustration is discussed fully in Mittman, ‘The other Close at Hand,’ 102.

images in the illustrated manuscripts follow the same prototype; they were clearly meant to be the same.<sup>198</sup> The illustration of the ox-man visually reinforces the bestial nature of the Irish by graphically showing the consequences of vice. To the modern reader the ox-man depicted generates pity rather than disgust. Brown points out that there is a certain amount of voyeurism that captures the interest in these images (of the ox-man, the bearded lady, the woman who loved a goat) but also ‘the possibility of a darker political agenda, and it is worth keeping in mind that immorality was an essential factor in obtaining papal support for the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland.’<sup>199</sup>

The previous chapter discussed two other stories referring more directly to bestiality, that of the woman at Rothericus’ court who loved a white goat, and the woman who loved a lion in Paris.<sup>200</sup> The former is also depicted as a marginal drawing, an elegantly dressed lady and a goat embracing each other, an image of tenderness, even innocence, were not for the disturbing presence of the goat’s erect penis, clearly pointing to the vice of bestiality. Bestiality is strongly condemned in the Bible (Leviticus 20:15-16). It was forbidden by the Council of Ancyra in 314 and condemned by Basil of Caesarea in 375.<sup>201</sup> In Western Europe rules of behaviour were regulated by penitentials, an Irish invention that had spread to the continent with Irish missionary priests.<sup>202</sup> We can recall how by the twelfth century, the animal in such a union was thought to deserve death.<sup>203</sup> When Gerald cites Leviticus 20:16 (‘thou shalt kill the woman and the beast’) regarding the woman who loved a lion, he is reflecting these general views.<sup>204</sup> Salisbury sees the animal-human unions in Gerald’s account as a blurring of the line between animal and human.<sup>205</sup> Huot also speaks of Gerald blurring the line between human and animal as a result of sexual activity between man and beast.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Brown lists several more cases where illustrations differ in ‘Marvels of the West: Giraldu Cambrensis and the Role of the Author in the Development of Marginal Illustration,’ 34-59:39f.

<sup>199</sup> Brown, ‘Marvels of the West: Giraldu Cambrensis and the Role of the Author in the Development of Marginal Illustration,’ 34-59:55.

<sup>200</sup> *Top.* 56, 57.

<sup>201</sup> Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, 70. On attitudes to and rules regarding bestiality, see Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, 66-80.

<sup>202</sup> Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, 98, 72.

<sup>203</sup> *Top.* 57. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, 73.

<sup>204</sup> In *Top.* Gerald cites 57. Leviticus 20:16; ‘If a woman approaches any beast to have intercourse with him, ye shall kill the woman and let the beast die the death.’

<sup>205</sup> Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, 74, 76.

<sup>206</sup> Huot, *Postcolonial fictions in the Roman de Perceforest: Cultural Identities and Hybridities*, 52.

When Gerald emphasises that bestiality is ‘a particular vice of that people [the Irish],’ he indirectly states that the Irish would be so much better under English rule.<sup>207</sup> As Huot points out, Gerald cites the value of conquest by a foreign people as means of eliminating sexual vices from a depraved populace.<sup>208</sup> In his *Description of Wales* Gerald clearly states that because of poverty and the subjugation of the English, the Welsh now refrain from sodomy.<sup>209</sup> Sodomy was, as Salisbury points out, often equated with bestiality.<sup>210</sup> To depict a people as primitive and barbarous, to render its conquering unproblematic, was not a new idea.<sup>211</sup> According to Gillingham the start of seeing Welsh, Irish or Scots as ‘the other’ in this era and locale can be seen in William of Malmesbury’s *Deeds of the English Kings*.<sup>212</sup> Gerald follows William of Malmesbury when he stains the Irish with tales and visible signs of immorality. Although William of Malmesbury does not speak of incest or bestiality regarding the English, there are similarities: the colonisers, on one side, represent the good values, reform; the colonised, on the other side, the sexually depraved, in need of church reform and English rule.

The ox-men are visible proof of this vice of the Irish. Gerald also gives a further example of what happens to a people that indulge in this vice. In a story about ‘A big lake with a marvellous origin,’ Gerald tells the story of a region that from ancient times was inhabited by a people ‘very much given to vice, and particularly addicted, above any other people in Ireland, to bestiality.’<sup>213</sup> By God’s will this whole region had then become flooded, and the ensuing lake exceedingly abundant in fish. This was the punishment for their crimes: ‘it looked as if the author of nature had judged that the land which had known such filthy crimes against nature was unworthy not only of its first inhabitants but of any others in the future.’<sup>214</sup> Immediately after this chapter Gerald tells a story that emphasises his view that the English conquest of Ireland was inevitable. It is one of the shorter chapters in the *Topography* and relates to a fish with three gold teeth found in Ireland just before the conquest. According to Gerald this

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<sup>207</sup> *Top.* 54.

<sup>208</sup> Huot, *Postcolonial fictions in the Roman de Perceforest: Cultural Identities and Hybridities*, 99.

<sup>209</sup> Gerald of Wales, *The Description of Wales*, 2.7.

<sup>210</sup> Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, 72.

<sup>211</sup> Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, ‘Hybrids, Monsters, Borderlands: The Bodies of Gerald of Wales,’ Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (ed.), *The Postcolonial Middle Ages* (New York, 2001) 85-103:87.

<sup>212</sup> John Gillingham, ‘The beginning of English imperialism,’ *Journal of Historical Sociology* 5.4 (1992) 352-409.

<sup>213</sup> *Top.* 42.

<sup>214</sup> *Top.* 42.

prodigy 'seemed to prefigure the imminent conquest of the country.'<sup>215</sup> In later rescensions Gerald explains that the golden teeth signify the golden time of the imminent conquest.<sup>216</sup> The conquest was on-going when Gerald was writing, thus for the reader it is no longer a prophecy: it is has become reality, it is taking place. Just like ancient portents, Gerald's strange or monstrous beings foresee what Gerald, with his colonial outlook, represents as an inevitable future.

## Conclusion

Adam describes monstrous and strange peoples known from ancient narrative tradition as living in the periphery of Sweden and Norway. To Adam they have a purpose, they mark that this is the end of the world, and thus remind the reader of the goal of Christianity: the conversion of the entire world, leading to salvation of mankind. The human status of the strange and monstrous is demonstrated by sources from Augustine to the eighth-century monk Ratramnus. Adam does not differentiate between the monstrous peoples or the historically attested peoples: they are all peoples in need of conversion. Adam especially emphasises the Amazons who are found to be close to God, indeed doing God's work.

In contrast, the strange and monstrous people in Gerald's *Topography* reinforce the idea of the Irish as a degenerate people, wallowing in sin. The perceived immorality of the Irish people is a large part of the English justification for the conquest. Although at times compassionate with the monstrous hybrid beings, even describing a 'talking wolf' sympathetically, the message these beings convey, either in themselves or as symbols, are that they are a punishment for vice, warnings of what may also happen to the English if they lapse from rectitude. Gerald uses the strange peoples specifically to designate a people as degenerate with the implication that they need improvement: rule by what he sees as a more civilised nation.

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<sup>215</sup> *Top.* 43.

<sup>216</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis, *The Topography of Ireland*, Thomas Forester (tr.) 2.10.



## Conclusion

This thesis compared and contrasted the depiction of Swedes and Norwegians in Adam of Bremen's *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* and the Irish in Gerald of Wales' *Topography of Ireland*, arguing that these depictions were modelled on ancient stereotypes of barbarians, negative as well as positive, and that the choice of these stereotypes was shaped by the authors' individual contexts: Adam's reform ideals in an era of imperial and papal strife in Germany; Gerald's concern with church reform, at a time of crusades and the ongoing attempts at a conquest of Ireland.

It argued that Adam and Gerald placed their respective locations and peoples within the concepts of ancient and medieval geographical and ethnographical thought, as remote islands in the Ocean that surrounded the tripartite terrestrial landmass that constituted the known world. This Oceanic location was believed to influence nature and wildlife as well as the character of the inhabitants; thus they shared a common geographical environment, yet their depictions of the inhabitants sharing this peripheral Oceanic location is widely different.

A main aim of this thesis was to investigate the application of classical stereotypes on the respective populations of the authors' own eras. The classical stereotypes about remote Oceanic locations like Sweden, Norway and Ireland encompassed two separate traditions of ethnographical and geographical thought, one positive and one negative. Adam and Gerald worked within this classical and medieval framework of ethnographical and geographical thought, thus they had choices; their depictions were not to be regarded as inevitable. In the first two chapters of his narrative Adam refers to the history of the Swedes and Norwegians, portraying them in the ancient stereotype of the savage and warlike barbarian. Regarding the Swedes and Norwegians of his own era he uses another ancient *topos*, that of peripheral peoples as pious and contented. Adam's stance is unusual for his time, when north was generally seen as a barbaric place. He could easily have characterized them as savages and barbarians to make the point that they needed conversion. He did not; instead he chose to see them as a positive contrast to the corruption and immorality

in Bremen, and as an idealised people through which the salvation of Christendom would take place.

Gerald too had a choice. He could have continued the positive medieval image of the Irish as scholarly and saintly, as presented by Bede and others. He could have used the same classical stereotypes as Adam and presented the Irish as innocent, making the point that it was not their fault that their clergy had failed them. Instead he reverted to a classical representation of the Irish as barbaric.

Adam and Gerald used a variety of sources in their narrative. In order to understand their visions and agendas this thesis examined the claims they drew from the sources used by the authors; classical, late antique and medieval primary sources; particular emphasis was placed on Gregory the Great and Bede. By analysing the two authors' use of these sources in their representations of peoples, I emphasised how their own individual circumstances, their views and position in society determined their representations. They did not merely repeat information but interpreted it to suit their own situation, creating works that are rich in variety, and which in themselves are open to different approaches of research.

To highlight the differences between the two authors I used comparison; although not clearly stated by them, this was also the method used by both authors. Describing the different cultural, religious and political aspects of the regions to which they are strangers is an almost unconscious act of pointing out what is different in their own regions. For Adam, the Swedes and Norwegians were an ideal, high above his own reality, different in their attitude to wealth and community from that of his own Bremen. To Gerald, the differences ascribed to the Irish were a deviance from a norm of civilisation that he, without actually stating this, attributed to the English.

Both Adam and Gerald had an impact on historical narratives. Just like Adam and Gerald used the past to promote their ideals, nationalist forces link with the past to serve their agendas. In the early modern era the presumed Swedish link with the Goths (as transmitted from Adam or directly from Jordanes) was cultivated and popularised.<sup>1</sup> The national heritage was seen as a source of strength, symbolising

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<sup>1</sup> Two main promoters Johannes and Olaus Magnus were the last catholic archbishops of Sweden: after Johannes death in 1544 Olaus inherited his office as Archbishop of Uppsala, in title only since both had been in exile since 1527. Johannes wrote the influential *Historia de omnibus Gothorum Sveonumque Regibus* (Rome, 1554).



courage and power. In modern times it came to be used by malignant forces. It is well known that German (and Swedish) Nazis used Scandinavian pre-history and medieval history to underpin their ideology. This is not a problem of the past: the neo-Nazis in Sweden today also favour the use of emblems or symbols that relate to Norse mythology.<sup>2</sup> This is also true for their southern counterparts: in Germany (and, in a bizarre twist, France) neo-Nazis have taken to use single runes as graffiti.<sup>3</sup> In the light of these evil forces' exploitation or misappropriation of history it is important to understand the classical and medieval roots of national stereotypes.

Whereas Swedes are generally pleased at Adam's benign depiction of their ancestors, an Irish person may still be offended by Gerald's representation of the Irish. His negative view of the Irish as barbarians 'dominated English political discourse on Ireland until the early modern period and beyond,' as Diarmuid Scully pointed out.<sup>4</sup> As late as 1835 pope Adrian's biographer Richard Raby relayed Gerald's ideas of the Irish when he spoke about shielding Ireland from her inwards foes, 'consisting in those elements of social discord so profusely, so deeply rooted, as it would seem, in the nature of her people.'<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, whilst this thesis focused on two medieval authors' depiction of peoples living in the periphery of Europe, these portrayals are relevant as they cast shadows to this day. Being aware of the sources and models, and context of their representations, helps us understand the origins of nationalism—both as a harmless celebrations of the past, and in the evil incarnation of the neo-Nazis—as well as understanding the roots of colonialism and the origins of a persistent English attitude to the Irish.

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Facsimile of this edition at <http://litteraturbanken.se/#!/forfattare/JohannesMagnus/titlar/Historia/sida/20/faksimil>, cited 9.6.2016. See Kurt Johannesson, *Gotisk rännessans* (Stockholm, 1982) 9-10. See also Olaus Magnus map: Olaus Magnus, *Carta Marina 1539*, Elena Balzamo (ed.) (Paris, 2005). *Götiska Förbundet* (Gaetish Society or Gothic League) was founded in 1811 to revive national history.

<sup>2</sup> On the Swedish Nazis using Nordic prehistory, see Lena Berggren, 'Volkisch Thought in Sweden: The Manhem Society and the Quest for National Enlightenment 1934-44,' in Horst Junginger and Andreas Åkerlund (ed.), *Nordic Ideology between Religion and Scholarship* (Frankfurt am Main, 2013) 162.

<sup>3</sup> Andrea Blendl, 'Runes and the European New Right: How and Why are Runes are Used in Political Contexts?' MLitt Viking Studies, University of the Highlands and Islands (July, 2016); Germany, 24-35, France 57-60.

<sup>4</sup> Scully, 'Christians, Pagans and Barbarians, 49-62:49.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Raby, *Pope Adrian IV* (London, 1835) 75.

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